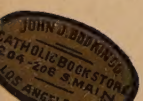
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Saint Francis of Assisi
Social Reformer

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

SOCIAL REFORMER

BY

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INTRODUCTION.

1. The Spirit of the Time of St. Francis.
2. The Social Problem.

THE bibliography of St. Francis reveals to us two facts equally striking: the wonderful abundance of the literature on the saint and his work, and, at the same time, the absence of any study professedly treating St. Francis as a social reformer. In the following pages an attempt is made to present him in this light. Hence, the sociological point of view is taken throughout. An effort is made to describe the steps by which he became a reformer, the work accomplished by him, the processes of his mind and the traits of his character as far as these affected his reform work, the social ideas and principles on which his reform work was grounded.

The following conclusions seem to be justified by the facts as brought to our knowledge by a study of the documents of St. Francis's time:

Francis, born in an age of faith, feeling, and enthusiasm, but also of social unrest, became a reformer as the natural outcome of his love for God and for everything which God has created. A strenuous saint, but none the less open to the tenderest human sentiments, a poet, a troubadour, a chevalier in character and aspirations, intensely in love with a poor, abandoned, but chaste maiden, "La donna Povertà," Francis felt that he had received from God a mission to convert the world and to restore the peace and happiness which ought to reign among His children. He went to the people, to the poor and the rich, to the laymen and the clergy, to the great and the lowly, captivating all, not only by his charming character, but also by his unstudied and unaffected, yet irresistible eloquence; thus he became the soul of a popular movement, which spread over all Europe and made itself felt in all parts of the then known world.

There was no philosophy, no method, no spirit of organization in Francis, nor were they necessary for the creation of a popular movement. When the preservation of Francis's work required thought, order, direction, he himself applied to the Church, that, "like a loving mother," she

might supply what was lacking in the child, and bring his work to completion and success.

Though the reform which Francis and the Church accomplished conjointly was above all religious, based on the Gospel and aimed at the conversion and salvation of man, it was nevertheless all-comprehensive, including the natural as well as the supernatural, the material as well as the spiritual in man. It aimed, not at the destruction of existing principles and institutions, but at the repression of abuses committed by individuals, and the triumph of charity and justice among men.

1. St. Francis was born in the year 1182, in the town of Assisi, situated on the slope of the mountains of Umbria, on the road from Perugia to Spoleto. He died in his native place, October 3, 1226. The greatest part of his life was spent in Italy, the center of Christendom.

His age was above all an age of faith. It was the age which saw two of the greatest manifestations of religious faith, the Crusades and the Gothic cathedrals. It was the age of saints, when heads of nations, kings and emperors, emulated the inhabitants of the cloister in the pursuit of Christian perfection. Such

were, for instance, St. Ferdinand, king of Leon and Castille; St. Elizabeth of Hungary and her holy husband, Louis of Thuringia; Blanche of Castille, the mother of St. Louis. The saints, perhaps even more than the warriors, were the popular heroes of the day. The discovery of the relics of a martyr was an event as remarkable as a change of dynasty. Public penances, long and painful pilgrimages, foundations of cloisters, sudden conversions, also were evidences of that active faith which permeated the people of the thirteenth century. It sounds like a paradox, yet it is true, to say that for them the supernatural was natural and the natural became supernatural. They lived in a supernatural atmosphere: everything which happened was a supernatural intervention of God, and they continually expected Him to perform miracles; the "Judgments of God" are an example to the point. They believed that they saw Christ, the Blessed Virgin, and the saints, and spoke with them. They thought that numerous devils were always ready to attack men if they were not on guard. St. Francis was not the only one who believed he found a legion of devils in his pillow. The numberless demons carved in the stalls, or painted on the frescoes,

or inlaid in the stained windows of the churches of that period, manifest well the mind of the time. Every fact which was somewhat out of the ordinary was immediately traced to God or the devil as supposed causes.

The supremacy of the Church in temporal as well as in religious matters, at the time when St. Francis began his life as a reformer, was a fact which could only strengthen this faith in the supernatural. Innocent III, then on the pontifical throne, had reached the climax of his power, and he practically ruled the world. He had compelled the French monarch to take back the wife from whom he had sought a divorce. The king of England had surrendered his crown to him, to receive it again as the humble vassal of the pontiff. Constantinople itself had become a Latin kingdom, and a Latin church had been established by Innocent within its walls.

The time, however, was not without its evils. This young people, full of faith, had many faults. The records of the Council of the Lateran, in 1215, reveal the presence of corruption in the ranks of the clergy; celibacy was not faithfully practised; simony was far from unknown, and many clerics entirely neglected one of the essential duties of their office: the preaching and

teaching of the word of God. The monasteries had become rich. With riches, corruption had too often entered the sacred inclosure. Among the people was found the strangest mixture of faith and vice. Not only were there great saints and great criminals, but frequently an individual passed suddenly from sin to self-denial or from virtue to vice. For the knight of the thirteenth century, God and the lady of his heart, devotion and gallantry, charity and revenge, cloister and battle-field, were all objects equally worthy of his ambition.

The Teutonic tribes that had invaded Europe several centuries before were still in the youth of civilization, unstable and enthusiastic. Enthusiasm was their normal state. They had only one desire: to consecrate themselves to a great cause. It may be the Crusade, the strict life of a Carthusian monk, the adventurous life of a knight or of a brigand; they would enter on any walk of life with the same ardor.

Poetry, imagination, mysticism, love of symbolism, were also characteristic of this young people. The troubadours and minnesingers celebrated the exploits of imaginary or real heroes. They sang religion, love, and war; but religion, love, and war were personified: in Christ, in the

Pope, in the lady whose banner the courteous knight carried through the world, or in the warrior who had performed wonderful exploits among the Saracens. The people of St. Francis's time understood abstract ideas only by their concrete realizations—they saw rather than understood. Religion for them consisted in devotion to saints and martyrs, to the person of Christ in the crib or on the cross, and it was unaccompanied by systematic contemplation of great spiritual truths. They saw in every creature a symbol of something higher and nobler: the material was the symbol of the spiritual; the natural of the supernatural. They saw God in the Pope, and for them the heretic was the devil incarnate. Lessons were better imparted to their minds by practical images than by speeches and theories; the sight of the Flagellants scourging themselves on the public squares moved them more than the sermon of their bishop.

At the same time, the age of St. Francis was one of transition. Besides the vigor, ardor, sensibility and imagination of youth, a deep and serious feeling began to take root. The feeling was one of dissatisfaction with actual conditions; a vague consciousness arose that in the Christian world something was wrong. This discon-

tent manifested itself in revolts, heresies, social conflicts. The ideal after which they aspired was not well defined in their minds. The spirit of discontent revealed itself in the lamentations and prophecies of Joachim of Fiora, the Calabrian visionary; in the revelations of St. Elizabeth of Schönau, and of St. Hildegarde of Bingen. Many attempts at religious and social reform characterized that epoch. Everyone felt the need of reform, though no one knew what should be the nature of it. Men, pushed at the same time by their restlessness and their enthusiasm, eagerly embraced any ideal of reform, and whenever a saint, a hero, or a deluded leader raised the banner of reform, he found numbers of adherents who adopted his cause, thinking that they had found at last the ideal for which they had been longing.

2. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the feudal system was in its decline. It had served a great purpose, after the invasions of the barbarians, in introducing order among European countries, and in protecting them from further incursions. But the system was far from perfect, and the evils which it entailed grew as the reasons which had justified the introduction

of it disappeared. The feudal system had necessarily brought about the division of society into two classes, serfs and lords. In the beginning the serfs had gladly offered to the lords their services in exchange for a much needed protection; but when the need of protection was diminished, the lords continued to exact from the serfs equal or greater services and taxes. Again, the system was based on the hierarchical distribution of land; land meant sovereignty, and a mere lord might possess more power than the king himself, solely because he had more land under his immediate jurisdiction. The serfs, owning no land, were deprived of all social and political power. The division between the two classes was thus rendered still greater, and the lower class was continually oppressed by those who possessed land and power.

The Church at this time was busily engaged in asserting against the emperors the supremacy of her power. The Popes, it is true, had done a great deal to improve the condition of the serfs and to obtain a recognition of their rights against the lords, and they used the ascendency which they had gained over the Christian nations in favor not only of morality, but also of justice and liberty. At the same time, the bishops had

too often abandoned themselves to a worldly life and to worldly ambitions; they possessed land, and enjoyed the power which the land gave them; they had their serfs, and often treated them no better than did the lords. The monasteries in the past had been refuges for those who, tired of the world and of the ways of the world, sought there the liberty of the children of God. Now they had become very rich, and a worldly spirit had followed the acquisition of worldly goods. Though still generous toward the poor, they had ceased to be their friends.

Hence the very agencies which, in the past, had softened the harshness of the feudal system, failed to apply the remedy at the very time when it was most needed.

The conditions, however, were not the same throughout all Italy. The Italian republics of the North had gone a long way toward emancipation and were at the head of the European movement for liberty. Pisa, Genoa, Venice, and other cities of Northern Italy had become, particularly since the beginning of the Crusades, the centers toward which gravitated all the traffic to and from the Orient. These circumstances had brought them riches, prosperity, and at the same time ambition, love of liberty and

of power. Each aimed not only at independence, but at supremacy as well. The bitter quarrels between Guelphs and Ghibellines, during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, were the outcome of this condition: the former represented the radical and progressive element, which stood for liberation from the foreign yoke, the independence of the Italian republics; the latter, more conservative, favored the emperor and his party, and thought that the only way to bring back to Italy unity and peace was to affiliate all those young states to the German empire.

Outside of these republics the movement was less advanced. It was particularly slow among country people, serfs or villains, who still formed the great bulk of population. They lacked the force which townsmen found in union. They lacked the resources which trade and commerce brought.

However, in the towns outside of the more advanced Italian republics, the movement fell in with the time of transition from feudal to communal régime. A general craving for liberty was felt by the townsmen. The communes were struggling against the lords. Charters were applied for, paid for, fought for.

The conditions in these towns deserve particular

attention, for it was in a town that Francis was trained and in towns also that Franciscan activity mostly exercised itself. The towns of Italy had developed rapidly in the twelfth century, owing chiefly to the revival of trade at the time of the Crusades. A mixed population had flocked there, partly from the class of the villains, who found there a refuge against the oppression of their masters; partly from the classes of the nobles, whose interests had brought them to those centers of trade and commerce. As already mentioned, in the towns virtue and vice were found side by side; there were great and noble actions, as well as crimes. The towns were often the refuge of suspicious characters, of tramps, of beggars, who lived on the work of others, of criminals, who found there a comparatively safe hiding-place. They were also the seat of much misery; the poor, the infirm, the aged, naturally frequented the places where riches abounded. This misery was further increased by the diseases which then infested the towns. The population was compactly inclosed within the walls in a space often comparatively small, having little air and little light, as the streets were narrow, the houses low and dark. The dirt of the streets was hardly ever removed; there were no sewers, and all the refuse was

simply thrown on the streets. Nor were there any sanitary measures to prevent or stop the progress of contagious diseases. Hence arose those epidemics which often visited the towns of Europe and destroyed a great number of their inhabitants.

Their intellectual and religious condition was little better. The instruction of the townsmen was greatly neglected, either on account of the lack of priests, or on account of the separation of the clergy from the lower classes. The clergy, as they became rich and powerful, had come to form a class of their own, which, as well as the class of the lords, considered itself superior to the townsmen.

At the same time, the towns represented the rising element of the age. As the feudal system, which had divided the European world into two social classes—lords and serfs, rich and poor, powerful and oppressed—was disappearing, a middle class was rising, the class of merchants and artisans, the burgesses, who now began to constitute a third estate. This was the progressive class, the class which largely formed the population of towns, and to this class the Bernardone family and Francis himself belonged.

Whatever may have been the political aspect of the social condition, the problem itself was regarded as religious, the evil was considered as religious, and the remedies offered were religious. Francis, as well as the majority of reformers at the time, was a religious reformer.

Religion was the basis of everything in the thirteenth century, and everything was seen through a religious coloring. The people thought and spoke of heaven and hell as our college boys speak of baseball and football. They were imbued with a religious spirit which we can hardly realize. They could never have thought of a political or economic question which was not, before all, a religious question. They did not isolate, as we do, the political and economic phases of a social system. They saw only lords, serfs, clerics, monks—all more or less in need of religious virtues which would have restored to all peace and happiness.

Besides, the evil, whose effects all might see, was the abuse of the power given by riches. To the eyes of this simple population, the love of riches and of the power which they gave was the great evil which made reform necessary. This excessive love of riches was a sin, and they saw no manner of doing away with it but by practising

virtue, and particularly the virtue of poverty which Christ had taught to the world.

Hence the remedies offered for the social failings of the thirteenth century were religious, and all the plans of reform were inspired by religion. As a matter of fact, religion had already contributed largely to temper the social evils of the time. We hear continually of the foundation of new monasteries, of lands and houses bequeathed to religious orders, of new communities which consecrated themselves to the redemption of captives or to the care of the sick, of generous almsgiving. But these good works did not eradicate the evil. Monasteries and religious orders were already too rich, and, though they gave abundantly to the poor, they, like private benefactors, did not use sufficient discrimination in their distribution of alms. Men of that age in their simple faith saw in almsgiving rather the meritorious action benefiting the donor than the relief of the poor, and we may well imagine that such indiscriminate charity must have often encouraged idleness. The congregations which had a social utility and which arose at the end of the twelfth century and beginning of the thirteenth, like the Confraternity of the Charitable of St. Eloy, of the Hospitallers of St. James,

the Trinitarians and the Order of Mercy for the redemption of captives, the Order of the Holy Ghost for the service of hospitals—all these certainly did a great deal of good, but they were limited in their aim, in their influence, and on the whole, were of little avail to eradicate the social evils of the time.

To quote Leo XIII, in his Encyclical "Auspicato" of September 17, 1882: "There was a penury of Christian virtues in the thirteenth century. A great number of men, enslaved by temporal things, either coveted honors and riches with frenzy, or lived in luxury and pleasure. All the power belonged to a few, and this power had almost become a tool of oppression against the despised and unhappy people. Those very persons who by their profession should have served as examples to the others had not avoided the stains of general vices. The extinction of charity in various places had had as consequences the apparition of manifold and many scourges: envy, jealousy, hatred; minds were so divided and so unfriendly that for the least cause neighboring cities waged war, and individuals took arms against each other." It was in one of these wars between cities that the ardent Francis took part when little over twenty years old.

Long before the day of Francis, vigorous efforts had been made on the part of Catholic reformers and of visionaries to reform society. In the first half of the twelfth century, St. Bernard (1091–1153) had already endeavored by his warnings and example to bring about the reform needed. His work hardly survived him, while the evil increased in the following period, and with the evil the protests which arose under various forms.

We find these protests in the visions and prophecies of St. Hildegarde of Bingen (1098–1179), and of Elizabeth of Schönau, who died in 1164, both nuns of great repute. The former boldly rebuked the clergy for their worldly conduct, their ambition, their thirst for riches, and announced to them a divine judgment which would deprive them of the riches through which they had been corrupted. The prophecies of St. Hildegarde were much read, and contributed largely to bring about the reaction.

Joachim of Fiora (1145–1202), the Calabrian monk who had been converted by the sight of the plague while on a voyage to the East, and had embraced poverty, announced the approaching end of the second age in the history of the world, and the beginning of the third age, the age of the Holy Ghost, the "Evangelium Æternum,"

in which the world, sick with the corruption caused by riches, would return to apostolical simplicity and poverty.

Among the more practical efforts of Catholic reformers may be mentioned the rise of the "Humiliati" of Milan, who wore a poor habit and earned their living by common manual labor, and of the "Pauperes Catholici," that branch of the Waldenses which, under Innocent III, submitted to the Church. But neither society had much influence: the former remained a local institution; the latter, regarded by the bishops with suspicion, never received their favor.

A number of the reformers came from the ranks of the heretics, and directed their efforts in opposition to the Church. They not only appealed to the ideal of the primitive Church, to the simplicity and poverty of Christ and His Apostles, but attacked the prelates of the Church for their worldliness, attacked the doctrines of the Church and her institutions, and pretended that she had no right to possess earthly goods, some going so far as to proclaim these earthly goods intrinsically bad.

Arnauld of Brescia, who died in 1155, left behind him a number of disciples who, until the Council of Verona (1184), continued to protest against

the possession of riches by the Church and the exercise of temporal power by Popes and bishops.

About 1160, Pierre Waldo, a rich burgess of Lyons, struck by the words of Our Lord on poverty, distributed his goods to the poor, and founded the society of the "Pauperes Lugduni." Led into revolt, they were excommunicated by Lucius III in 1184; they spread nevertheless with great rapidity, particularly in Northern Italy, preaching the return to apostolical simplicity and poverty.

Other sects of reformers arose, going by the name of Apostolicals, like those of Périgueux in the South of France. As their name indicates, they claimed to follow the Apostles in renouncing all earthly goods and interests. But their influence was very small compared with that of the Albigenses, who also spread chiefly in the South of France. The Albigenses were not, it is true, a new sect, and their origin can not be attributed to the spirit of reaction against the corruption of the Christian world by riches. But, if this spirit of reaction did not cause their rise, it certainly caused their wonderful spread at the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth century through Southern France, Northern Italy, and Germany.

They condemned matter as coming from the evil principle, and, with more logic than moderation, looked upon riches, property, marriage, as radically bad, because belonging to the material world. The members of this sect, particularly the "Perfecti," presented themselves before the people as rigid observers of the evangelical law and of evangelical poverty, and it was the practice of the Gospel and of poverty, far more than their dualistic doctrines, which brought to their ranks so many recruits. We read in St. Dominic's life that the Papal legate and the twelve Cistercian abbots sent by the Pope to convert the Albigenses gained no success whatever. The heretics would naturally compare their own leaders, professing to live in poverty as followers of Christ and His Apostles, with the pomp and luxury which accompanied the Catholic prelates. The popular feeling was on the side of poverty, and when Dominic and Didacus, bishop of Osma, began their missionary labors among the Albigenses, they first put themselves on a level with the leaders of the sect by renouncing all pomp and state. They led a poor life, traveled on foot, and avoided all demonstrations of honor; and, later, Dominic, as far as circumstances allowed him, adopted for the Preaching Friars,

as a more effective means of obtaining success among the heretics, the absolute poverty which was practised so well by the Franciscans.

What may surprise us is the success of these anti-Catholic movements in that time of active faith. It may be accounted for by the restlessness—that vague but constant aspiration after a better state—which characterized the age. Nor were these movements limited by physical barriers or by nationality. The European world as a society was then beginning to exist. The merchants, travelers, troubadours, propagated the news and the popular movements as well.

The merchants went about from castle to castle, from borough to borough, and were welcomed by all—lords and townsmen. During the long winter evenings all gathered around them and heard from them the happenings of distant lands. They had seen much themselves, but they had also learned a great deal from the Crusaders, from the pilgrims, from the soldiers and adventurers whom they had met in the ports, in the inns, on the roads.

At the same time the troubadours of Provence spread everywhere their poetic strains on the popular questions of the day. Bernard of

Ventadour, Cadenet, Raimbaud de Vaqueiras, and Pierre Vidal, went to Northern and Central Italy, and sojourned there during Francis's boyhood. They also spoke of the corruption caused by riches and the desire of wealth, and neither cleric nor bishop was spared at their hands. Hence, a heresy born in France was soon transplanted into Italy and even Germany, and *vice versa*.

It seems, however, that those popular and religious movements affected more particularly the South of France and the Northern part of Italy. It was there that the Waldenses and Albigenses obtained their greatest success, the towns being generally their headquarters and center of operation. It was from Northern Italy, and from a town, that the great Catholic reformer of the thirteenth century arose.

The common remedy proposed by all reformers of that epoch, in and outside of the Church, was a return to apostolic poverty and simplicity. These features of reform agitation had attracted great numbers. It was by practising and preaching apostolic poverty and simplicity that Francis and his followers achieved their great reform.

PART I
HISTORY

CHAPTER I.—ANTECEDENTS.

1. Early Life.
2. To Social Reform.

1. THE father of St. Francis, Pietro Bernardone, was a rich merchant who traveled through Italy and France, in the interests of his business.[1] He has been represented by some as a hard, avaricious man; by others, as liberal and generous, but irascible and obstinate. The latter view seems to be the better supported.

While Francis was working at his father's trade, we know that he arrayed himself in the most costly clothes, and that it was customary for him frequently to invite his numerous friends to sumptuous banquets. At the same time he gave abundantly to his friends and to the poor.[2] His father never thought of inter-

[1] 3 Soc., 2. References are given to the edition of the Bollandists for the legend of the Three Companions, as also for the first life of Tommaso di Celano and the legend of St. Bonaventure. For the second life of Tommaso di Celano, the Amoni edition has been used.

[2] I Cel., 2, 3; II Cel., I, 13. 3 Soc., 2, 3.

fering with these habits. In fact he allowed Francis to spend money as freely as he wished. But when Francis gave up his worldly life, and resolved to follow Christ, a complete change appeared in the conduct of his father. He not only refused to coöperate in his son's good work as he had formerly encouraged him in his life of dissipation, but even disowned him and took from him the very clothes he wore.[1]

In Francis's mother, Pica, a Provençal, according to tradition, we find a very different character. She was simple, affable, virtuous, yet at the same time energetic. She did not hesitate, in spite of Bernardone's orders, to break the chains which held Francis prisoner in a dark corner of the house.[2]

We know but little more about the parents of Francis. Yet, from what we know, we can not help remarking certain general traits common to parents and son. We find in the latter a strength of will much akin to the obstinacy of Bernardone. We also find in him the simplicity and affability of his mother, Pica. His early education was perhaps a little neglected, since the extravagant manners and princely ways of his youth were

[1] I Cel., 14, 15; II Cel., I, 7. 3 Soc., 18, 19. Bon., 19.
[2] I Cel., 13. 3 Soc., 18.

those of a spoiled child.[1] Though he received little instruction, calling himself an illiterate man, yet he learned some Latin at the ecclesiastical school of Santo Giorgio, and also spoke some French.[2]

A quick intelligence and early contact with business made up, to a certain extent, for this lack of schooling. While a young man he was associated with his father in business, proving to be a "clever merchant."[3] In this capacity we may presume that he had frequent intercourse with men of different countries, and that he, like his father, traveled somewhat in Northern Italy and in Provence. Unfortunately, his early biographers confined themselves to the mere statement that he was a clever merchant.

Some details concerning his worldly life and his early ambitions have been preserved. At the head of the young men of Assisi, he gave his time to poetry and gayety, to songs of love and pleasure, and the inhabitants of the little town wondered at the sight of his extravagant way of dressing, of the money which he spent or gave away lavishly, of the banquets to which he in-

[1] I Cel., 2; II Cel., I, 1. 3 Soc., 1.
[2] 3 Soc., 10, 24, 33. Bon., 219.
[3] I Cel., 2.

vited his numerous friends; and his own parents were heard to say, "Our son lives like the son of a prince."[1]

When war was declared between Assisi and Perugia Francis took up the cause of liberty, fighting with the people against oppression—against the lords. As a soldier he was brave, and devoted to his companions during their captivity.[2] A little later, he heard of the knight, Gauthier de Brienne, traversing Italy at the head of an army. This news awakened in him the most ambitious hopes, and he decided to follow that knight.[3] "I know," he said to his friends on leaving Assisi, "I know that I shall be a great prince."[4] But, arrived at Spoleto, he had a dream. God appeared to him, and said, "Who can do thee more good, the master or the servant?"

"The master," answered Francis.—"Why then hast thou abandoned the master for the servant, the prince for the subject? Return to Assisi, and there I will show thee what thou oughtest to do." Francis, in his simple faith, obeyed what he believed to be the divine call,

[1] I Cel., 2, 3. 3 Soc., 2, 3.
[2] II Cel., I, 1. 3 Soc., 4.
[3] I Cel., 4. 3 Soc., 5. Bon., 9.
[4] II Cel., I, 2. 3 Soc., 5.

and returned to Assisi. For the last time, he consented to preside at a banquet. But, as the joyous guests paraded through the streets, dancing and singing, they saw that Francis had remained behind, motionless and plunged in deep meditation. They asked him laughingly if he thought of taking a wife. "You speak the truth," he answered, "for I have resolved to espouse a wife nobler, richer, and more beautiful than all those that you know."[1] A new ideal had flashed before his eyes, an ideal to which he would consecrate his life. It was no longer poetry, war, knighthood—it was a higher and more worthy ideal, the ideal of Christian poverty, of which he would henceforth be the champion.

2. From the world to God, from God to poverty for the love of God, from poverty to social reform for the love of the poor of God, such were the steps in the mental process by which Francis became a reformer. He surrendered worldly ambitions to embrace the cause of God, even before his new ideal was well defined.

Whether Francis had ever heard from the lips of his father returning from long voyages, or from his Provençal mother, the story of the efforts

[1] I Cel., 7; II Cel., I. 3. 3 Soc., 7.

of the orthodox Humiliati and of the heretical Waldenses and Albigenses to bring the Christian world back to apostolic poverty and simplicity, is not certain.[1] But it is evident from the first biographies of Francis that in his early years he had a great love for the poor. Though fond of pleasure, he was moved to tears by the sight of misery, and he loved to relieve it. Once when busily engaged in his father's shop, he repulsed a beggar who asked him alms for the love of God. Immediately a feeling of remorse flashed over him. He ran after the beggar, put into his hand several pieces of money, and then took the resolution never to refuse alms to anyone who would apply to him in the name of God.[2] A little later, when on his way to join Gauthier de Brienne, richly attired as was his custom, he met a poor knight miserably clad. He was moved to such sympathy that he immediately divested himself of his costly garments, and forced them on the poor knight.[3]

Francis's conversion marks an epoch in his love of poverty. From that time on, he became

[1] H. Thode: "Franz von Assisi," p. 32. R. Mariano: "Francesco d'Assisi," p. 126 ff.

[2] I Cel., 17. 3 Soc., 3. Bon., 6.

[3] I Cel., 4. 3 Soc., 6. Bon., 8.

more and more convinced that it was truly the state to which God called him; and, imitating the young knight who, for his first tournament, carefully concealed his identity until he received the laurels of victory, Francis went to Rome under the pretence of making a pilgrimage to the tomb of the Apostles, but in reality to try the state which he intended to embrace. Arrived there, he changed his rich garments for those of a poor man whom he met on the steps of St. Peter's, and representing himself as a beggar, he asked alms from those who passed.[1]

This was the apprenticeship through which he entered his new profession. When he returned to Assisi, his determination was fixed. Poverty would be his bride, and to her he would consecrate his life.

Some time after his return, while he was praying before the Crucifix in the little church of Santo Damiano, he heard the voice of Our Lord: "Francis, do you not see that my house is falling to ruins? Go and repair my house."[2] Francis understood these words as applied to the little chapel, which was indeed falling to ruins. He began immediately to beg and to carry stones,

[1] II Cel., I, 4. 3 Soc., 10.
[2] II Cel., I, 6. 3 Soc., 13. Bon., 15.

and to call on the passers-by to come and help him repair the house of God. But, after a time, as he told his brethren, it was revealed to him that the words of Christ applied, not so much to the material chapel which he had repaired, as to the Church which needed reform.[1]

Shortly after hearing the voice in Santo Damiano, Francis was persecuted by his father, whom this transformation had angered. He stripped himself of his clothes in the court of the bishop of Assisi, and said, "I will return to my father even the clothes which I have received from him. Until now I have called Pietro Bernardone my father; from henceforth I will say in all truth: Our Father who art in heaven, you are my treasure and my hope."[2] He called himself the "herald of God," and began his work of charity among the unfortunate in the leper house on the Gubbio road.[3]

On the 24th of February, 1209, he assisted at Mass in the church of the Portiuncula, which also he had repaired.[4] At the Gospel, the priest read the words of Christ to His Apostles, when

[1] Bon., 16.

[2] I Cel., 14; II Cel., I, 7. 3 Soc., 20. Bon., 19, 20.

[3] I Cel., 16, 17. Bon., 21, 22.

[4] Cf. Montg. Carmichael in "Dublin Rev.," Ap., 1903. "Irish Eccl. Rec.," March, 1904.

He sent them forth to preach the kingdom of God: "Do not possess gold, nor silver, nor money in your purses, nor two coats, nor shoes, nor a staff."[1] This was a new revelation to him. He now saw his ideal of poverty more clearly and fully, and he realized that it was the ideal of the Apostles when they set out to win the world to Christ. This impression strengthened him in his determination: he left the church, threw away with horror the little money which he had received in alms, discarded his staff and his shoes, put on the rough habit of the Umbrian peasant, with a cord around his waist, and began preaching penance, evangelical perfection, and above all, peace. "May God give you peace!" was his motto, his salutation, the beginning and the end of all his exhortations and discourses.[2]

He soon found disciples. "His language, simple, but inspired by the Holy Ghost, penetrated to the heart and to the marrow, so that those that heard him were struck with admiration."[3] Bernardo of Quintavalle, the rich burgess of Assisi, and Pietro the canon, were the first to follow him. Though the ideal of Francis's

[1] Mat. x, 9, 10.
[2] I Cel., 22, 23. 3 Soc., 25, 26. Bon., 26, 27.
[3] 3 Soc., 25.

life was already well defined, yet he wished to have a confirmation of it for the disciples who wished to join him: "We shall go to church," he said, "and seek in the Gospel what Our Lord has recommended to His disciples."[1] According to the custom of the time, Francis opened the book of the Gospel three times at random, to know what kind of life they should adopt. The first time he read this passage of St. Matthew: "If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast, and give to the poor; and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven; and come, follow me."[2] The second time he found these words of St. Luke: "Take nothing for your journey; neither staff, nor scrip, nor bread, nor money; neither have two coats."[3] The third time he found the text of St. Matthew: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."[4] Francis was overwhelmed with joy: God had given him another proof that he and his disciples must live up to the apostolic ideal of poverty in order to reform the world. "Brethren," he said, "this will be our life and

[1] I Cel., 24. 3 Soc., 29. Bon., 28.
[2] Mat. xix, 21.
[3] Luc. ix, 3.
[4] Mat. xvi, 24.

our rule; it will be also the life and the rule of all those who will join our company."[1]

Brother Egidio and a few others soon joined the little company, and Francis sent them to begin the work of reform: "Consider, my dear brethren," he said to them, "the vocation to which God has called you, not only for your own salvation, but for that of many, that we may go through the world, exhorting men by our example more than by our words to do penance for their sins, and to remember the commandments of God. Do not fear, though you be weak and ignorant, but announce penance simply, confiding in God who has conquered the world, for His Spirit will speak in you and through your mouth, and will exhort all men to be converted and to keep His commandments. You will find some men faithful, meek, and kind, who will receive you with joy and will hear your words. You will find others, and these far more numerous, who are unfaithful and proud; they will receive you with blasphemies, they will resist you and what you say to them. Take, therefore, the resolution to support everything with patience and humility. Then after some time many men will come to

[1] 3 Soc., 29.

you, some of them noble and learned, and will go with you to preach to the kings, the princes, and the people, and many will return to God, who will multiply and increase His family in the entire world."[1]

The preaching of the new apostles, if indeed it may be called preaching, was very simple. We are told that "The man of God did not properly preach to the people, but when passing through towns and castles, simply exhorted them to love God and fear Him, and to do penance for their sins. And Brother Egidio would tell his hearers to believe Francis because he gave them excellent counsel."[2]

The simplicity, poverty, childish joy, and enthusiasm of Francis and his followers were interpreted differently by those who saw and heard them: some thought they were drunk or insane, others admired them, were touched and joined them.

There was no ceremony of initiation, no novitiate for the recruits; they gave their goods to the poor, and having put on the peasant's tunic and the cord, they went wherever Francis sent them, to preach penance and peace.[3]

[1] 3 Soc., 36.
[2] 3 Soc., 33.
[3] 3 Soc., 27–33.

In spite of many failures and rebuffs, Francis had the most buoyant hopes for the future: the little company would accomplish its work for the reform of the world: "Be cheerful," he said to his followers; "be cheerful, and rejoice in the Lord. Let not your little number be to you a cause of sadness: God has revealed to me that He will deign to propagate throughout the world this family of which He is the Father. I would wish to be silent on what I have seen, but charity requires me to tell you. I have seen a great multitude of men coming to us, wishing to wear the habit of our company, and to follow the rule of our holy religion. The roads were filled with them. The French are coming, the Spaniards hasten to join us, the Germans and English are running, as well as an immense multitude from other countries. And even now the sounds of the footsteps of those who are coming and going where obedience calls them are ringing in my ears."[1]

From the beginning of his work of reform, Francis had sought advice from the bishop of Assisi. The latter one day remarked that such a perfect renouncement of all earthly goods was very hard: "My lord," answered Francis, "if we

[1] I Cel., 27. 3 Soc., 36.

possessed anything, we would need arms to protect ourselves. For, from possession arise difficulties and disputes which put obstacles of all kinds to the love of God and our neighbor. This is why we wish to possess nothing in this world." This answer pleased the bishop very much.[1]

But, as the little company increased in numbers and won success, Francis, as a most faithful son of the Church, wished to have the society approved by the Holy Father. The aim held up was the reform of the Christian world. Though approbation was not necessary at the time,[2] Francis thought that his great work should receive the blessing of the head of the Christian world. Having written a short rule, which has not reached us, but which his historians declare to have been composed mainly of words of the Gospel, he departed for Rome with his company, which at the time was composed of twelve members.[3] He reached Rome in 1209,[4] Innocent III being Pope. When he saw Francis and his companions, and learned their plans, he was much less enthusiastic than they. The

[1] 3 Soc., 35. Bern. Bess., "De laudibus," Cap. II.
[2] IV Counc. Lat. 1215.
[3] 3 Soc., 46. Bon., 34, 35.
[4] or 1210, as Sabatier holds: "Vie de St. François d'Assise," 29th ed., p. 100.

Pope took time to consider the question before giving his approbation.[1] Francis was by no means discouraged by this first sign of opposition. He secured the influence of the bishop of Assisi, then at Rome, and of the Cardinal of Santo Paolo, and returned to the Pope with a beautiful allegory of Lady Poverty, abandoned by the world and cherished by him and his followers.[2] Pope Innocent was won. He gave his oral approbation: "Go in the name of the Lord," he said to them, "and preach penance to all as the Lord will inspire you, and when the Almighty will have increased your number, come to me again and I will do more for you and confide to you greater charges."[3]

It was only later, in 1223, that the company was definitely approved. But, from this time, 1209, the reform movement assumed a character of its own and soon took an expansion which was little short of wonderful.

[1] I Cel., 33. 3 Soc., 49. Bon., 35.
[2] II Cel., I, 11. 3 Soc., 47–50. Bon., 36, 37.
[3] I Cel., 33; II Cel., I, 11. 3 Soc., 49, 52.

CHAPTER II.—ACTIVITY IN SOCIAL REFORM.

1. Means of Reform.
2. Results.

1. WHETHER Francis, in gathering around him a few disciples and in applying to Rome for the approbation of the little company, intended to found a monastic order or merely a lay association, is a matter of controversy.[1] Perhaps the truth lies between the two extremes; and, if the fact is by no means clear in the legends of the saint and in his own words and actions, the reason may be that it was not yet clear in his own mind. As a matter of fact, either as a consequence of a reasoned plan, or by the force of circumstances, Francis founded both a monastic order and a lay association; or, to speak more correctly, he founded two monastic orders,—which, later, came to be called respect-

[1] Vogt, Müller, Sabatier, Lempp hold for the lay association. Hertzog, Mariano, and Catholic authors generally, hold for the monastic order.

ively the "Friars Minor" and the "Poor Clares," —and the "Third Order," now known by that name and which was properly the lay association. These became for him the means by which he carried out his reform.

The first order included all those who, following in Francis's footsteps, were to be active workers in the field of reform. Each order had its own ideal, from which it received its character, and through which it was distinguished from others. Poverty was to be not only the favorite virtue of Francis and his first disciples, but the profession and practice of all those who joined the order. Francis made it the test of vocations to the community of the "Poor Penitents," or "Minores," as they were called later. No one could be received into the order unless he had sold his goods and given the product to the poor: "Go your way, Brother Fly," he said to an applicant who had distributed his fortune to the members of his family; "you have not yet given up your home and your family; you have given your goods to your relatives and robbed the poor; you are not worthy to become the companion of the poor of Christ. You have begun by the flesh; it is a dangerous foundation for a spiritual edifice."[1]

[1] Bon., 90.

Not only was every individual member bound to practise absolute poverty, but the communities themselves, and the order as a whole, were not allowed to possess anything whatever.[1] It was the first religious order which, as a community, renounced the holding of property. In all other cases, though the individual religious did not possess property, the community could and did possess land, houses, and money. The "Minores," according to Francis's mind, were to own nothing beyond what satisfied the needs of the moment.

Francis's aim in demanding from his disciples absolute poverty was to give a lesson to the world. He believed in the force of example, and told his brethren that it was their vocation to go through the world exhorting men, rather by example than by words, to do penance for their sins and to remember the precepts of the Lord.[2] He felt that the world could not behold this community

[1] "Opuscula S. P. Franc. Ass.:" Reg. 1a, Cap. viii; Reg. 2a, Cap. vi. These rules are called "prima" and "secunda" in the editions of St. Francis's works, though in fact one or several rules were written before, but are now lost. Cf. K. Müller: "Die Anfänge des Minoritenordens," p. 4 ff.

Spec. Perf., Cap. 13.

[2] I Cel., 29. 3 Soc., 36.

in which the poverty of the members was equaled only by their charity and happiness, without realizing that other joys besides those supplied by fortune and power await those who seek them.

Francis was not content with mere poverty; labor and poverty were abhorred by the world, and Francis wished that his brethren, as well as the poor, should work, and thus give to the world an example of patience and happiness in poverty and labor.[1]

Preaching was naturally to be a means of propaganda; it was not the stiff, official, or scholastic preaching which was customary at that time, but rather popular appeals.[2] The desire of Francis was that his companions, preaching to the people and for the people, in the streets or fields as well as in churches, wherever men could be gathered together, should preach from the heart, should preach peace, charity, Christian happiness, employing simple, ordinary language understood by all.[3] He gave his disciples the best examples of this popular preaching, when he took for his text the

[1] "Opuscula": Reg. 1a, Cap. vii; Reg. 2a, Cap. v. Testamentum.

[2] Lecoy de la Marche: "La Chaire Française au moyen âge."

[3] Reg. 1a, Cap. xvii; Reg. 2a, Cap. ix.

popular Italian proverb, "Tanto é il bene ch'io aspetto, ch'ogni pena m'é diletto;"[1] when he spoke to the young lords after the tournaments in the castle yard, or to the peasants after having shared in their work in the fields, or to the people of Grecio assembled around the "presepio" in which lay the "Bambino."[2]

Besides example and preaching, Francis demanded from the members of the first order the care of the lepers. In the beginning, the brethren lodged in the leper houses when on their travels through the country.[3] One of the chief duties of the followers of Francis was to visit, assist and console their "Christian brethren," as he called those unfortunates.[4]

The poor, the destitute, were to be the objects of the tenderest care on the part of the brethren. They were to be welcomed at all times in the houses of the "Minores," they were to find in their company a new family, to share the alms which the brothers received or the food which they earned by the labor of their hands. Francis desired to

[1] Actus B. Franc. et Soc., Cap. 9.

[2] I Cel., 84–86. Bon., 149, 150.

[3] Spec. Perf., Cap. 58; Cf. also P. Sabatier's notes in Spec. Perf., pp. xxx, 25, 79.

[4] Spec. Perf., Cap. 58.

form a community of poor men,—poor in reality and in sympathy.[1]

This, in brief, was the character of the first order which Francis instituted for the reform of the Christian world. But not all could join the first order, nor, on the other hand, were all satisfied with merely hearing the zealous sermons and admiring the example of the brothers.

A second order, of which Clara was the first member, soon became a necessity and received a multitude of "Povere donne," who also practised perfect poverty.[2]

But married people could not join either of these orders, and hence Francis was brought naturally, by the demands of his converts, to the idea of the Third Order. This was even more than the first an instrument of reform.[3]

The aim of the Third Order was, of course, eminently religious; but its aim was more attain-

[1] I Cel., 76. Bon., 94. Spec. Perf., Cap. 17, 20.

[2] I Cel., 18. 3 Soc., 60. Bon., 46. Bern. Bess., Cap. 7. Reg. Stæ. Claræ, Cap. 8. Cf. Lemmens: "Die Anfänge des Clarissenordens" in "Römische Quartalschrift," T. XVI, p. 93 ss. Lempp: "Anfänge des Clarissenordens" in "Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte," T. XIII, p. 202 ss.

[3] 3 Soc., 60. Bon., 46.

able by the multitude than that of the first and the second orders, nor did it require so active a part in the reform of the world. The rules of the first and second orders enjoined the observation of the Counsels; those of the Third Order enjoined only the observation of the Commandments. The "Minores" were to go through the world to preach to all penance and peace; the "Fratres de Pœnitentia," as the members of the Third Order were called, were required to reform only themselves, and by their example, those with whom they were brought into immediate relation. But besides this religious object, there was a strong social feature in the constitution of the Third Order.

The brethren were forbidden to carry offensive weapons, and to take solemn oaths; they were to contribute a monthly due to a common fund, and finally, to make their wills within three months after their admission into the order.[1]

These four articles, considered in their relation with the needs and evils of the time, contained in germ a whole social reform. The serfs were obliged, in order to secure a protection much needed at that epoch, to take an oath of alle-

[1] "Reg. ant. fratrum et sororum de Pœn." Sabatier's edition. Cap. 6, 7 and 10.

giance to the lord; but the lord too often abused the right thus obtained over his subjects, and forced them to take part in petty quarrels which he had with his neighbors or his vassals: the first and second articles mentioned above obviated this evil. Another right which was often used and abused by the lord was that of seizing the goods of the serfs who died intestate: hence the clause of the rule of the Third Order requiring the members to write their wills. The other article aimed perhaps still further; this monthly fee was to bind together all the members of the Third Order, and to give them the strength of union in assisting each other in case of sickness, death, or poverty; but besides, whether intended or not, it was to supply the serfs with a fund from which they could obtain means to redeem themselves from heavy services, or even to buy their freedom.

2. It is to be regretted that documents concerning the reform work of Francis are scarce and incomplete. His first biographers, after the manner of the Middle Ages, see in him only the saint; his reform work is touched upon only incidentally. The best sources are the archives of the places where Francis preached, or where the

Franciscan influence was felt during the thirteenth century. Some work has been done on these documents. However, more remains to be done, and no doubt it will be, as the movement in Franciscan literature seems to be only in its beginning.

The first effect of the new movement was the infusion of a new spirit into the Christian world, and to this result both the first order and the Third Order contributed.

Within a few years from the foundation of the first order, at the Chapter of 1219, the "Minores" numbered about 5,000, and included all classes of men, "rich and poor, nobles and villains, prudent and simple, clerics and laymen."[1] This number alone shows how efficacious were the preaching and example of the first Franciscans. There can be no doubt that a much greater number, unable to leave the world, had been at that time converted by the brothers, and had returned to a life of penance, charity, and peace.

The preamble and termination of all the exhortations of Francis and his companions was, "May

[1] I Cel., 31, 36. Bon., 52. Thom. de Eccleston: "De adventu Fr. Min. in Ang." in "Monumenta Franciscana." London, 1858, pp. 25, 26.

the Lord give you His peace,"—and this peace was often the result of their efforts.

After a mission preached by Francis in Assisi the citizens of the town drew conjointly the charter which remains as a monument to the glory of the Reformer-Saint. It is said in this charter that between the "Majores" and the "Minores" of Assisi (i. e., lords and serfs) the following convention had been agreed upon: "Neither party will sign any treaty or pact with Pope, bishop, king, or any other, without the consent of the other party; they will live together in perfect harmony for the good of all," etc.[1] A few days before Francis's death, no longer able to preach, he converted, by a verse of poetry added to the "Cantico delle Creature" and sung by his brethren, the bishop and the mayor of Assisi, who embraced each other publicly and promised to live henceforward in peace and charity.[2]

A letter in the archives of the city of Bologna has the following on the occasion of the passing of Francis through the town: "At the close of his sermon, he spoke only of the extinction of hatreds and of the necessity of concluding

[1] Cristofani: "Delle Storie d'Assisi," Lib. II, p. 130, quoted by Le Monnier, Vol. I, p. 167.

[2] Spec. Perf., Cap. 101.

treaties of peace and union. He converted noblemen whose boundless ferocity and unrestrained cruelty had made blood flow throughout the country, and among whom many became reconciled."[1]

What Francis did in his native town and in Bologna, he did also wherever he passed. Ascoli,[2] Alviano,[3] Greccio,[4] Perugia,[5] Arrezzo,[6] and many other towns[7] saw their inhabitants reconciled and brought back to the practise of justice and charity under the powerful influence of our reformer.

The personal influence of Francis was multiplied many times by the action of his brothers, whom he sent to the different provinces and countries to propagate the work of reform.

[1] Sigonius: "De Episc. Bonon.," Lib. II, ad an. 1220, quoted by Le Monnier, Vol. I, p. 417.

[2] I Cel., 62.

[3] I Cel., 59. Bon., 175.

[4] II Cel., II, 5.

[5] II Cel., II, 6.

[6] II Cel., III, 51. Bon., 83. Cf. Giotto's fresco in Assisi on the driving out of the devils from Arrezzo. Thode: "Franz v. Ass.," pp. 133–135.

[7] Like Toscanella, Gubbio, Citta de Castello, Bevagna, Gaeta, in which the historians of St. Francis tell us that he not only performed miracles, but obtained numberless conversions. Cf. I Cel., 62–70. Bon., 170–187.

It is true, not all enjoyed the prestige of Francis, but all came from Francis, they had embraced his life, they brought his letters,[1] his message of peace and happiness, and they were received as Francis himself. At the words of these apostles of love, men threw aside dissensions, hatreds, wars, and swore to practise the charity which Francis and his poor brothers practised so well, that they might also participate in that joy which was characteristic of the Franciscan missionaries, and in the spiritual reward which they promised.

The work which the "Minores" began, by their preaching and example, the Third Order continued and perfected. Men were converted to a better and more Christian life by the friars, and these conversions were not only sincere, but as a rule, lasting. Some joined either the first or the second order, but the majority, obliged to remain in the world, entered the Third Order, the main object of which was precisely, to foster the Christian spirit of justice to all, of charity of the rich for the poor, and of patience and contentment in the poor themselves.

[1] "B. Franc. As. Opera," Epist. 1a and 2a, "ad universos Christi fideles;" 13a, "ad universos Clericos;" 15a, "ad populorum rectores." In the Quaracchi edition Ep. 1a and 4a.

To what extent the Third Order spread, and with it this Christian spirit, which was the foundation of Francis's social reform, we learn from a contemporary letter: "The Brothers Minor and the Preaching Friars have created two confraternities, to which all, men and women, rush, so that there can hardly be found a person who does not belong to one or the other."[1] The numerous bulls of the Popes, in favor of the members of the Third Order, point also to a wonderful development of this institution.[2]

If Tommaso di Celano could say, in the first years of Francis's reform work, that the appearance of the country had been changed under Francis's influence,[3] we may well imagine how, after the expansion of the movement through the activity of the first and third orders, a new spirit pervaded almost the whole Christian world, from England to Sicily, from Portugal to Hungary, and even as far as Palestine, Egypt, and Morocco.

The infusion of this practical Christian spirit, by which charity and peace were restored to the

[1] Pierre des Vignes. Quoted by Le Mon., Vol. II, p. 10.

[2] Bullarium Franciscanum, pp. 8, 19, 30, 39, 51, 65, etc. . . .

[3] I Cel., 37.

world, was certainly the main result of the reform movement originated by Francis; yet there is another result which, though more limited in extent, and beyond Francis's intention, had a great social and political importance. It is the share which the Franciscan movement had in the disappearance of the feudal system, particularly in Italy.

We have seen the social and political nature of the four articles mentioned when speaking of the rule of the Third Order: these articles, if carried out, meant to a great extent the emancipation of the serfs. That the fact eventually took place is known chiefly from the bulls of Honorius III and Gregory IX. The struggle for liberty began during Francis's very life, and continued after him.

On the 16th of December, 1221, Honorius III interfered in favor of the Tertiaries of Rimini.[1] The people of Rimini had joined the Third Order in great numbers, thus avoiding the oath and the military service to which the lords endeavored to subject them; the Sovereign Pontiff, in virtue of the Papal authority, ordered the lords not to molest men who belonged to a confraternity the members

[1] Bull. Franc., p. 8.

of which professed to lead a Christian life, a life of penance.

It was like an inspiration to the rest of Italy, and a few years afterward, we learn from a contemporaneous document—the letter of Pierre des Vignes already quoted—that almost all Italy belonged to either the Franciscan or the Dominican Third Order. The lords tried by all means to retain their authority and their rights over their subjects, but to no avail.

On June 25, 1227, Gregory IX, by a new bull, solemnly approved the Third Order, and declared again that its members were not liable to feudal oaths and military service.[1]

The lords made a last effort against the movement towards liberty; they appealed to previous oaths, put a tax on those who refused military service, refused the money offered in exchange for services, and tried to make the whole corporation liable for the debts and delinquencies of individual members. Gregory IX again took the side of the people and insured them complete triumph.[2] There were still, after that, local troubles, which he and his second successor, Innocent IV, settled in every instance in favor

[1] Bull. Franc., p. 30.
[2] Bull. Franc., p. 39.

of the Tertiaries; but the victory had been already won; the feudal system had been sapped in its very foundation, and the Italian democracy had received a strength which was soon to render it victorious in its conflict with Frederick II of Germany.[1]

While the Franciscan movement brought about a social revolution by the restoration of the Christian spirit and the emancipation of the serfs, it had also secondary effects which may not be overlooked. Francis's love for the poor, the sick, the lepers, has already been touched upon. This love was practical and efficient. Not only he, but all his followers, who were soon counted by thousands, and among whom were many who were noble and rich, gave up all they had to the poor. Not only did they distribute their own fortunes among them, but the product of their labor and the alms which they received also went largely to relieve the misery of the unfortunate. There is no doubt that, frequently perhaps, this relief was granted to unworthy, designing poor; yet it is evident that this displacement of wealth was on the whole beneficial. The Third Order had

[1] St. Francis has been called by Sabatier "The Father of Italian Democracy," in "Conferenze Dantesche," Vol. II,—and by Cristofani "The Patriarch of Religious Democracy," in "Storie d'Assisi," I, p. 70.

also a common fund for the relief of poor members, and besides the spirit of solidarity which this institution fostered, and the good relations which it established between the rich and the poor, it practically relieved a great deal of misery, and at the same time paved the way for those beneficent "Monte di Pietá" which were organized two centuries later by the Franciscans, and particularly by the blessed Bernardino di Feltre.[1]

Finally, the care of the sick and the lepers, most dear to Francis, was also an obligation of the Friars Minor, and was recommended to members of the Third Order.[2]

Leprosy was one of the scourges of Europe in the Middle Ages. It spread particularly at the time of the Crusades, and was at its height when Francis appeared. To the physical and moral sufferings of these unfortunates, who were condemned to a slow and painful death, were added the shame of a condition which was looked upon as typical of sin, and the complete separation from the rest of mankind. After a ceremony which resembled very much the rites for the dead,

[1] Ludovic de Besse: "Le Bienheureux Bernardin de Feltre." Tours, 1902.

[2] I Cel., 39, 103. Testam. B. Franc. Spec. Perf., Cap. 44, 58.

the leper was led to the lazar-house or to the solitary little hut which was to be his dwelling-place for the rest of his life. Only at Easter-time was he allowed to leave this place and come to church; but even then he had to wear a special habit, he was obliged to warn passers-by of his presence by means of a rattle whose sound was abhorred by all; only wide roads were allowed to him, and he could touch nothing which was used by others.

As a rule, however, the lepers were not entirely abandoned. Their unfortunate lot excited the charity of the faithful, who rarely passed in front of their houses without dropping an offering into the wooden cup suspended before their doors, and the bishops were constituted their official protectors. Besides, a few orders arose in the twelfth century for the care of the sick, like the "Poor of Christ," founded by Robert d'Arbrissel in the diocese of Rennes, the "Brothers Hospitallers" of St. Anthony and those of the Holy Ghost, founded in the South of France.[1] But these influences were only local and of limited scope. The work of Francis and his followers, on the

[1] Dr. Max Heimbucher: "Die Orden und Congregationen der Katholischen Kirche." Paderborn, 1896. Ernest Lavisse: "Histoire de France," T. III, p. 357 ff.

contrary, was, we may say, universal. They went through all the countries of Europe, and everywhere their first care, after the preaching of the word of God, was given to the lepers. They lodged in the leper houses and there comforted and assisted these unfortunate people, washed their wounds and dispensed to them all the tender cares which their quick sympathy for all sufferers would suggest. The towns, of which they were the missionaries and reformers, were also centers around which the lepers were most numerous: hence the Franciscans became the apostles of the lepers as well as of the towns.[1]

The members of the Third Order also were friends and protectors of the lepers. St. Louis, king of France, was accustomed to wash and dress their wounds with his own hands, and when dying, he desired that a part of his fortune should be consecrated to the building of two thousand leper houses. St. Elizabeth of Hungary and other members of the Third Order also gave immense sums for the relief of the lepers.[2]

The result of this care was evidently an

[1] "Monumenta Franc.," I, p. xxi ff.

[2] It is a constant tradition that both St. Louis and St. Elizabeth belonged to the Third Order. Cf. "Monum. Franc.," I, p. 543; "Anal. Franc.," I, p. 267.

improvement in the sanitary conditions of the leper houses and in the treatment of the disease, which was finally extirpated. The wave of sympathy for these unfortunates brought about greater charity between the different social classes, and contributed largely towards that reform of the Christian world of which Francis had dreamt, and which to some extent he realized.

PART II
THE CHARACTER OF ST. FRANCIS

CHAPTER I.—FRANCIS THE SAINT.

TOMMASO DI CELANO, one of the first historians of Francis, gives a detailed portrait of him which serves well as an introduction to the study of his character.

"Oh, how beautiful, how splendid, and how glorious was this countenance which reflected the innocence of his life, the purity of his heart, and on which could be continually read his burning love for God and for his neighbor. His was truly an angelic appearance. Sweet in his manners, he was of a tranquil nature; affable in his discourse, his exhortations were appropriate; he was faithful in his charge, foreseeing in counsel, and effective in his transactions; gracious in all, he was ever serene in mind and tender in feeling; he was constant in contemplation, prompt in pardoning, and slow to anger; gifted with a wonderful memory, he was sharp in discussion, circumspect in choice, and yet simple in all. Strict towards himself, he displayed the utmost consideration for others. Simple and eloquent in his speech, he continually spent himself in the

service of others, and far from being haughty in his demeanor, he showed himself cheerful and kind to all.

"In stature he was a little above the middle size; his head was round and not too large; his face was oval and his features drawn; his forehead was small and even; his eyes were of medium size, black and truthful; black hair, eyebrows straight, a nose fine, even and straight, ears erect and small, and flat temples, constituted the upper part of his countenance; his voice was vehement, sweet, clear, and sonorous; his teeth were closely set, even, and white, his lips small and thin; his slender neck was set on square shoulders, and his short arms ended in small hands with long fingers, the nails of which were projecting; his legs were slender and his feet small; his skin was thin and he was very lean; he was coarse in his attire, he slept little, and gave abundantly of the little he had; because he was most humble, he showed himself mild to all, and conforming himself to the customs of others, he surpassed the most holy in sanctity, and when among sinners considered himself as one of them."[1]

[1] I Cel., 83. Cf. Portraits of St. Francis; Thode: "Franz von Ass.," p. 59 ff. Bournet: "St. François d'Assise," p. 18 ff.

We may rely on this picture as fairly accurate, since it was written two years after Francis's death. The minute description of his physique reminds one of the typical inhabitant of Southern Europe. The moral characteristics are those of the saint, such as he appeared towards the end of his life, when his nature had been broken into subjection by constant ascetical practices, and by the cares and worry of a founder's life. The holiness and virtues of the gentle Francis were very important factors in the influence which he exercised over his contemporaries. One may not neglect them in any study of him.

Francis is a canonized saint. The title Saint is universally applied to him, and it is as a saint that he is most securely fixed in the traditions of the Catholic Church. He was a saint before being a reformer. His love of God, and of everything which belongs to God, brought him to social reform.

Francis never separated in his own mind those two objects: God and reform; to reform God's world was for him only a way of loving God. In his youth he could not refuse an alms when it was asked him in the name of God. Love of God was the principle which inspired all his activity, hence he could not see the needs of the

world which God had created and be indifferent to them.

His devotion to the person of Christ was most tender, and he had no other desire but to serve Him and bring all men to serve and love Him. He knew of no other reform but that of bringing back the Church to the purity of her first days, when she came immaculate and holy from the hands of her Founder. Hence he had taken the Apostles as models for himself and his followers. Their object was the same as that of the Apostles: the conversion of the world to the purity of Christ's ideal.

Again, Francis had the greatest horror for sin. It was for him the only evil. In the same way as he saw no other society but the Christian Church, so also he saw no social evil other than sin. Reform meant only the elimination of sin. Wars, dissensions, hatreds, violations of justice and charity, filled the world because of sin, and Francis set to work to bring peace, justice, charity, to establish the reign of virtue.

The contemporaries of Francis loved and admired his holiness. It made him the hero of the people. When he appeared in Assisi after his conversion, changed in habits, in looks, in manners, his former friends were ashamed of

him, called him a fool, and threw mud and stones at him;[1] and in the first years of his preaching, though some men admired him and his companions, and were touched by their words, others thought they were drunk or insane. Young women fled at their approach, and young men seized them by the hood and carried them on their shoulders.[2] But the patience, humility and charity with which they met this rudeness, soon converted the hardest hearts, and it was not long before Francis became the idol of the Italian population. His travels through the country were like a triumphal march. "When he approached a town," says Tommaso di Celano, "the clergy rejoiced, the bells were rung, men exulted, women were filled with joy, children applauded; they often went to meet him in procession, threw branches and flowers on the road on which he was to pass, and received him amidst the singing of hymns and universal jubilation."[3] As he advanced in age, this popularity grew: "He is truly a saint, he is the friend of the Most High," they said.[4] They esteemed themselves

[1] I Cel., 11. 3 Soc., 17.
[2] 3 Soc., 34, 40.
[3] I Cel., 62.
[4] I Cel., 59. Bon., 175.

happy if they could only touch his garment, and sometimes the crowd around him was so dense that he could hardly proceed.[1]

The popular belief in his power of continually performing miracles still further increased his prestige as a saint. The earliest records tell us that the birds of the air, the fishes of the sea, seemed to understand him and to love him; that fire ceased to burn at the sound of his gentle voice; that sickness, leprosy, even passion and vice, disappeared at his command.[2] The Italians of the thirteenth century, so full of faith, so impressed by the reality of the supernatural, could not fail to be won by the man of God, and they followed him, fascinated by his holiness and power.

The student of the life of Francis should not fail to give due importance to this reputation for holiness which the saint enjoyed during his active career. The active, emotional, believing people, whose simple earnestness of faith disposed them to follow and obey those who represented God, Christ, or who showed by their lives that they lived in the presence of God, readily gave power to Francis by their willing obedience.

We may account for it as we will; historically

[1] I Cel., 63.

[2] I Cel., 63-70. Bon., 174–187. (Tract. de Mirac.)

it is a fact: the foundation of the power of Francis lay in his holiness and his reputation for sanctity. But, our purpose does not require the study of the process of life which brought him to the vivid consciousness of God.[1]

[1] H. Joly: "Psychologie des Saints," 5th Ed., Paris, 1898. E. Hello: "Studies in Saintship," St. Louis, 1904.

CHAPTER II.—CHARACTERISTICS OF MIND.

1. The Emotional Man.
2. The Enthusiastic Reformer.
3. The Idealist.

1. AMONG the saints, some were inclined to sever relations with the world, and to live with God as exclusively as the limitations of life allowed. Few perhaps, have, more than Francis, lived with God and for God; at the same time, he never ceased to be interested in men. It has been said that he was the most human of all the saints. We would be tempted to add that he was the most human of all reformers. The reformer is sometimes taken up by an ideal, forgetting all else; his affections, his tastes, his sympathies for other interests disappear.

It was not so with Francis; the saint and reformer always remained the man, with all the emotions, the sympathies, the love, and the gentle feelings of the most refined human nature.

Holiness did not destroy his tender affection for human nature, but rather elevated and sanctified it. His sympathies were not contracted by his reform work, as is so often the case with the modern reformer. There was nothing in the world, from the angels in heaven to the grass and rocks of the field, which was not the object of his love and admiration.

Trained by a tender mother, in a country on which nature had lavished all her riches and beauties, at a time when love and pleasure alternated with bitter rivalries and wars, and when chivalry and profane poetry had introduced a spirit of gallantry and an exquisite sensibility, the young Francis's emotional nature developed to such an extent, that it remained unaffected by either the asceticism of the saint or the disappointments of the reformer.

The love which, from his boyhood, he had for the poor, the sympathy which he felt for the lepers from the time of his conversion, could not but increase when he consecrated himself to their service. However, he kept unto the end his love for nature, for poetry, for chivalry, and for everything which appealed to the more tender sentiments of the human soul. His heart was con-

sumed by the passion of love. He loved God, he loved his dear poverty, his Lady Poverty, he loved men, particularly the poor, the weak, the sick, the unfortunate; but he also loved nature, irrational creatures, the birds and the fishes, the trees and the flowers, which were all his brothers and his sisters.

This love for God, and for everything which came from God, brought him to social reform. Francis saw the world from God's point of view; all was good because all came from God. "And God saw that it was good."[1] Only one creature broke this beautiful harmony: man disturbed the general equilibrium. He did not return to God the praises due; he had forgotten his Creator; man was himself divided,—one nation at war against another, one class striving against another, the rich against the poor, the poor against the rich. There was no unity, no harmony, no beauty in the human world, and Francis set to work to repair the world of God and reestablish the lost harmony on the model of the Apostolic Church. As social reformer, he never ceased to be at heart a true artist, a man keenly alive to the sense of harmony, of

[1] Gen. i. Cf. the idea of moral harmony in man in St. Bernard and St. Thomas Aquinas.

beauty in the world; but more particularly in the world of men, in the Christian world, which he tried to bring back to its proper harmony with God the Creator.

Francis was a poet as well as an artist—he loved poetry, and favored the cultivation of its spirit in his community; he wrote it[1] and used it as a means of social reform, a means which in that imaginative age often proved very effective.

The sympathy of Francis for nature, his mystical contemplation of the world of God, his understanding of the harmonies of the universe, his burning love for all that came from God, could not fail to reveal themselves in poetic conceptions and poetic expressions. Tommaso di Celano tells us that he invited all beings, "the rivers and the seas, the mountains and the valleys, men and angels, to praise their Maker, and he remained in the center of this concert like an inspired musician, summing up in his heart all the sublime harmonies, to offer them up in burning adorations to Him who is the source of all harmony and all beauty."[2]

[1] Cf. A. F. Ozanam: "Les Poètes Franciscains en Italie au treizième siècle." Goerres: "Der heil. Franciscus v. Ass., ein Troubadour."

[2] I Cel., 80, 81.

It was in one of these moments of poetic fervor that Francis composed the famous Canticle of Creatures:

"Altissimo omnipotente bon Signore,
"Tue son laude."[1]

Francis called himself an illiterate man, and though his humility may have exaggerated the sense of his limitations in learning, yet we know that in his youth he never studied with great ardor, and that, in the first years of the foundation of his order, he made very little of science. But we never find any such slighting opinion of poetry. On the contrary, he always cultivated it, honored poets, received them into his order with the greatest welcome, and encouraged them in the practice of their art. We know that Brother Pacificus, the "King of verses," was a favorite friend of Francis, and that probably he retouched much of the saint's poetic compositions.[2]

[1] "B. P. Franc. Ass. Op." Spec. Perf., Cap. 120. Cf. also music and poetry which he composed for the Poor Clares: Spec. Perf., Cap. 90. Cf. also C. Zacchetti: "Francesco d'Assisi e le Laudes Creaturarum." Assisi, 1904.

[2] Bon., 50, 51. Spec. Perf., p. 108, note 2. Ozanam: "Les Poètes Franc.," pp. 107–109. Mon. Germ., v. 22.

Francis relied on poetry in his reform work: his brethren were to learn his poetic strains and recite them, like the troubadours and the jongleurs, on the streets, on the roads, on the public squares, to excite all to praise the Lord. "The most eloquent among them should preach to the people, and after the sermon all should sing the 'Laudes Domini' as the jongleurs of the Lord. Then after the singing of the 'Laudes,' the preacher should say to the people: 'We are the jongleurs of the Lord, and for this we wish to be rewarded by you; the reward shall be that you should do penance,'"—and St. Francis added: "What are indeed the servants of God but His jongleurs, who must raise their hearts to Him and fill them with spiritual joy."[1] This troubadour way of preaching the word of God could not fail to affect the souls of the romantic contemporaries of Francis.

The sentiments which he expressed in verse touched the heart and converted it in a way which directly promoted social peace. No other object was nearer to his heart. On the occasion of reconciliation between the bishop and the mayor of Assisi, he merely composed a few appropriate verses and ordered some of his

[1] Spec. Perf., Cap. 100.

brethren to go and sing in chorus, before the bishop and the officers of the town, the Canticle of the "Laudes Domini," with the addition of the new strain. Peace was immediately arranged.

The artistic and poetic nature of Francis was deeply imbued with the chivalric spirit of the time, and this feature of his character is also closely connected with his reform work and has left its imprint on the Franciscan movement of the thirteenth century.

The institution of chivalry blended religion and military valor with the finest feelings of human nature. It had reached its highest development in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. In Francis's time the armies of Europe and the military orders still offered to the world the example of courageous, fearless knights, ready to offer their lives for the sake of their religion and their God; but the finer feelings in chivalry, its sweet devotion to the poor, to the weak, to the widows, to the orphans, its veneration for woman, its amiable and poetic language, its courtesy,—to use a word which, derived from the manners of the feudal courts, expresses well the outward manifestation of sweet, kind, generous sentiments,—had almost disappeared.[1]

[1] Léon Gauthier: "La Chevalerie," Paris, s. d.

Francis was of a chivalric character before his conversion: his ambition was to become a knight, and he had not only the brave, generous self-sacrificing spirit of the ideal knight, but also his gentleness, amiability, tenderness, and sympathy for the weak, the poor, the infirm.[1] When he entered upon the new life, he did not cease to be a true knight. He embraced the new career as a knight would espouse a great and noble cause in which his valor and generosity were to be put to severe test. His historian, Tommaso di Celano, calls him constantly, "the soldier of Christ."[2] The conversion of the Church and the social reform which he contemplated, appeared to him as a chivalric enterprise.[3] His followers were his knights, or rather the knights of God. When Brother Egidio begged him to be admitted into the order: "Brother," Francis answered, "you ask the Lord to receive you as His servant and His knight. This is no small favor. If the emperor were passing through Assisi, and if he were pleased to select a favorite, everyone would say, 'Pray Heaven it may be I.' How much more ought you to bless the great King of heaven for

[1] Cf. for instance Spec. Perf., Cap. 27–39.

[2] I Cel., 9, 36, 72, etc. . . .

[3] Spec. Perf., p. xxix: "La réforme de l'Eglise lui apparait comme une sorte de chevauchée épique."

having cast His eyes upon you?"[1] Later he was accustomed to say, in his chivalric style, that "Egidio was one of his paladins of the Round Table."[2] In fact, this is the title which he gave to all his disciples: "These are my brothers, soldiers of the Round Table. The reward of their merits and of their works is the eternal kingdom which they have conquered by the violence of their humility, their simplicity, their prayers, and their tears."[3] Only with difficulty could one find a more natural or attractive combination of the religious and the chivalric spirit. To a novice who requested the permission to have a psalter, he answered again in his chivalric style: "Charles the Emperor and Roland and Oliver, and all the paladins, and all the robust heroes who were powerful on the battle-field, pursuing the heathens, sparing neither sweat nor labor, even unto death, conquered their enemies, and the holy martyrs themselves have died in the lists for Christ's faith. But now, there are many who are satisfied with reading the narration of their deeds and expect to receive honor and human praise."[4]

[1] Acta Sanct., Ap. 23, de B. Œgidio, Cap. I, 2.
[2] Id. Cap. II, 9.
[3] Spec. Perf., Cap. 72.
[4] Spec. Perf., Cap. 4.

His constant effort was to infuse into his disciples not only courage, but also affectionate sympathy for the weak, for the wronged, for all those who suffer—traits which had been the noblest ornament of chivalry.

He introduced into his order and into religion itself the tender human emotions, the sweet human love which, with Francis, from profane, became sanctified by being directed to the holiest and noblest objects of religion.

There was no chivalry without the "Lady"; the true knight always had his lady to whom he consecrated himself; he would go about in quest of adventures for the honor of his lady, whose beauty and perfections he wished to be known and admired by the entire world. The knight Francis could not fail to have his lady. She is the noblest, the richest, the fairest maiden whom men ever saw.[1] But it is poverty which will be during all his life the lady of his thoughts, the lady of his heart, his spouse whom he loves above all things. For her he will go about the world and proclaim everywhere her beauty and glory. She has been neglected, forgotten, abandoned by the world; but now the world must know her again, love her

[1] I Cel., 7; II Cel., III, 1. 3 Soc., 7.

and embrace her. She is all beautiful and the kings fall in love with her. To her Francis has vowed an eternal love, and it will be the first duty of his followers to love her and sing her grandeur.[1] There is nothing more chivalric, more poetic, and, at the same time, more tender and sweet than the prayer of Francis in favor of Lady Poverty: "She was in the crib, and, like a faithful squire, she remained well armed at your side during the great battle which you have waged for our redemption. In your Passion she alone has not abandoned you. Mary, your Mother, remained at the foot of the cross; but Poverty ascended with you the wood of the cross and pressed you to her bosom to the end. . . . She, attentive spouse, when you died with thirst, prepared for you the gall which you drank. You have expired in her sweet embrace . . . etc."[2]

[1] 3 Soc., 50. Cf. "Commercium B. Franc. cum Domina Paupertate."

[2] "B. P. Franc. Ass. Opera." This prayer is regarded as spurious by many authors and has been left out of the Quaracchi edition of St. Francis's works. However, all admit that it represents perfectly the spirit of St. Francis. Cf. also Giotto's fresco: Francis placing the ring on the finger of his bride, Poverty; Thode, p. 480 ff. Dante: "Paradiso," Cant. xi, lines 28–123. Montgomery Carmichael: "Lady Poverty."

These same sentiments are found in all the religious and mystical poetry of Francis and his followers, in the "In foco l'amor mi mise," in the "Amor di Caritate," and many others belonging to the early Franciscan school. In all of them we see the sweetest love, the tenderest emotions of human nature as well as the refinement, the gallantry of that chivalry which, under the influence of the emotional, poetic and chivalric Francis, came then to the service of religion, and remained for a long time characteristic of the Franciscan movement, and to a great extent, of the Italian religious spirit.[1]

2. Francis was a man of great ideals. He was a true and loving friend of the poor and all who suffered; he had all the chivalric sentiments of a knight. He was a poet, and in the real sense of the word, an artist. These varied powers were fused by a great enthusiasm which added immensely to his influence. This enthusiasm reveals itself from the very boyhood of Francis.

[1] Cf. E. Gebhart: "Italie Mystique," Paris, 1899, pp. II, 136. "Love of the Saints," in "Contemp. Rev.," Vol. 67, p. 499. F. Ozanam: "Les Poètes Franciscains." Cf. also in connection with this the charges of "sensual devotion" (Michelet, III, 116), "religious erotics" (Bournet, p. 57), and "Mariolatry" (B. F. Westcott, in "Social Aspects of Christianity," p. 111).

In his youth he abandoned himself with great ardor to pleasures and society. Later, war for liberty engaged him. A long stay in the dungeons of Perugia failed to dampen the enthusiasm which surprised and even scandalized his companions in misfortune: "Ah, you are surprised," he answers; "do you not know that I shall be adored by the whole world?"[1] With the same enthusiasm he left Assisi to join the brave Gauthier de Brienne, the protector of the rights of the Holy See, the hero of Capua, of Canne, whose name alone made all hearts thrill with admiration. To fight for the rights of the Roman Pontiff, to war against the invaders of his native country, to win for himself a name on the battle-field, to deserve perhaps one day the honors of knighthood, to receive maybe his knight's sword from the very hands of the hero Gauthier de Brienne, was a great prospect which Francis embraced eagerly, convinced that he "will now become a great prince."[2] With the same ardor he returned to Assisi only a few days later: "I will stay in my own country," he says, "and here I will accomplish grand and noble things."

[1] II Cel., I, 1. 3 Soc., 4.
[2] I Cel., 4; II Cel., I, 2. 3 Soc., 5. Bon., 9, 10.

The eagerness with which he consecrated himself to the reconstruction of the church of Santo Damiano, adopted the life of the Apostles on hearing the Gospel of the Feast of St. Matthias at Santa Maria degli Angeli, preached to the people of Assisi and recruited his first companions, shows that his native enthusiasm had only increased under the influence of a higher and nobler ideal. A strong conviction had taken hold of his mind: the Church of God needed reform; he would accomplish this reform by bringing back the Church to the purity of its first days. This became the great object of his life. No difficulty could hinder him; in fact the difficulties which he met,—the tender reproaches of his mother, the severe and cruel action of his father, the jeers and scorn of his friends, the persecutions to which he and his companions were subjected during their first missionary travels, the divisions among his brethren, and later, the opposition of some of the highest members of the order,—all these, however deeply felt by his sensitive nature, did not deter him from his object. They became new incentives to redoubled efforts in the work of reform.

When we consider that the active life of St.

Francis embraced only seventeen years (1209–1226), that during this short time he traveled through most European countries and through Egypt and Palestine, that he founded and directed the first order of the "Minores," the second order of the Poor Ladies, and the Third Order, in which all classes were united by a common rule and uniform life; when we recall that these orders had, by the time of Francis's death, spread in all countries then known, and counted thousands of members in each country,—we may well be struck with astonishment at the immense activity displayed by the wonderful poor man of Assisi.

This activity, particularly during the first years of his missionary life, was accompanied by an intense and childlike joy, which sprung from his very passion for poverty and for the reform which he preached. This joy became characteristic of the Franciscan reform movement, and was one of its elements of strength. "To the devil and his followers belongs sadness, to us joy and happiness in the Lord,"[1] he said to his brothers, and he made it a point of his rule of 1221, that they "should be careful not to show

[1] II Cel., III, 65. Spec. Perf., Cap. 95.

themselves sad and dejected, but rejoicing in the Lord, happy and courteous."[1]

In fact, for Francis, this joy was more than the mere external outburst of an exalted state of mind; it was a condition of success; the world can not be reformed by sadness and melancholy, and "a joyful disposition has sometimes more influence on men than the good actions themselves; if a good action is not done fervently and joyfully, it rather causes sadness than incites to do good."[2]

The disciples of Francis, faithful to the lessons of their master, imitated him so faithfully that Franciscan cheerfulness became proverbial. Living in a wooden house in Stinking Lane, Newgate Street, one of the most miserable and offensive quarters of London, and clinging together to warm themselves; or traveling through Germany, where the rude inhabitants with cruel levity stripped them of their clothes; or seized by the ferocious Saracens and thrown into dark cellars from which they were to go out only to be led to death,—everywhere they showed themselves to

[1] Reg. 1a, Cap. vii. II Cel., III, 68. Spec. Perf., Cap. 25, 95, 96. Cf. also P. Sabatier's note in Spec. Perf., p. 190.

[2] Spec. Perf., Cap. 96.

be happy and cheerful.[1] Egidio, one of the favorite disciples of Francis, would "kiss the grass, the stones, and other things of this kind for very joy."[2] Poor with the poor, courteous with the rich, respectful toward ecclesiastics and princes, they made themselves all to all, adapting themselves to all circumstances, and spreading everywhere joy and contentment. People had never seen anything like these monks. Traveling barefoot, working at the different trades and in the fields, eating with their fellow-laborers, conversing with them, singing for them, begging when they had nothing to eat, and always happy and cheerful,—this was indeed a novelty in the Church, and quite a contrast with the rich, silent, and stern Benedictines, who were seldom seen outside of their monasteries. People began to realize that there is happiness outside of riches, outside of power, outside of worldly pleasures; that there is happiness in poverty, in suffering, in tears, in persecution. They had heard the Sermon on the Mount read to them

[1] Jordanus de Giano: "Chronica," in Anal. Franc., I, n. 27, p. 10. Glasberger: "Chronica," in Anal. Franc., II, p. 13. Wadding, T. I, an. 1216, n. ix. Brewer: "Monum. Franc.," Vol. I, p. xvii ff.

[2] Spec. Perf., Cap. 96. Acta Sanct., Ap. 23, Tom. III, p. 227.

perhaps—"Blessed are the poor . . . blessed are those who suffer. . . ."—but the truth of these words had never come home to them until they saw the poor Franciscans. It was a revelation to them, and a revelation which contained the germ not only of a religious but of a social reform as well.[1]

3. The emotional, enthusiastic, exalted nature of Francis indicates a great development of the imaginative faculties, which fact led some historians and psychologists to express doubt regarding his sanity. Some have made him a mere visionary,[2] others a fanatic,[3] others an altruistic luna-

[1] II Cel., III, 65–68. The Perfect Joy: "Actus B. Franc.," Cap. 7, and "Fioretti," Cap. 8. The following quotation of Renan is to the point: "L'humanité, pour porter son fardeau, a besoin de croire qu'elle n'est pas complètement payée par son salaire. Le plus grand service qu'on puisse lui rendre est de lui répéter souvent qu'elle ne vit pas seulement de pain." "Vie de Jesus," 12ème edition, 1864, p. 184.

[2] Petrus Pomponatius, Cornelius Agrippa, Giordano Bruno in sixteenth century. Also all free thinkers who attribute the stigmata to an overheated imagination. Cf. Imbert–Gourbeyre: "L'hypnotisme et la stigmatization." Paris, 1899.

[3] Neander: "History of the Christian Church," Eng. ed., Vol. iv, p. 273 ff.

tic[1] or a gentle fool.[2] Indeed there was little reasoning in Francis. Emerson relates the meeting of Abul Khain, the mystic, and Abu Ali Seena, the philosopher, and tells us that on parting, the philosopher said, "All that he sees, I know," and the mystic said, "All that he knows, I see." Francis saw things more than he understood them: he saw poverty, his ideal; it was always present before his mind, like a most beautiful picture. It was not for him the result of a dogmatic or logical process, it was an intuition.

From the day when he had heard read in the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli the Gospel narrative telling how the Apostles, on the counsel of Our Lord, embraced a life of poverty, to his last moments, when he wished to be put naked on the floor, in order to imitate the poverty of Our Lord dying naked on the cross, he never ceased to have his eyes fixed on this cherished ideal.

[1] Aug. Comte. Cf. the medical studies on St. Francis by Cotelle (p. 157) and Bournet (p. 101).

[2] Henry Hallam: "View of the state of Europe during M. A.," 9th edition, London, 1846, Vol. II, in which he calls Francis "a harmless enthusiast . . . hardly of sane mind." E. Renan: "Nouvelles êtudes religieuses," 1884, pp. 325, 336, "un accès de charmante folie."

He saw poverty as no one outside of his school, perhaps, ever saw it before, or since.

Many others have voluntarily joined the ranks of the poor of Christ; they have given their goods to the poor, in order to be poor themselves; or they have embraced religious poverty, renouncing every desire to possess the goods of this world; but for these poverty was a means, not an end. The danger in riches led some to make the sacrifice of material goods in order to protect their spiritual interests. Others have seen in this sacrifice a guarantee of humility, mortification, confidence in divine Providence. Others again have been struck by the words of Our Lord in His Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,"[1] and to gain the kingdom of heaven they have renounced the satisfactions of this life.

Reformers have adopted poverty as a condition, or even as a means, of social reform. By their doctrine and example they condemned the abuses caused by the possession of excessive riches, and exhorted the rich to live a simpler and more Christian life, the poor to bear with patience and even with joy the state in which Providence had placed them.

[1] Mat. v. 3.

In Francis the process of mind was much simpler. It is true, for him poverty was a means of personal sanctification and of reform;[1] but it was far more than that. It was for him what an axiom, an evident truth is for us. It was a concrete fact, always present before his mind; he saw it and loved it. He loved it for itself, not only as a means, but as an end. Regardless of its personal and social advantages, poverty was for Francis an all-sufficient ideal: to contemplate, to love, to realize in himself and in others this beautiful ideal, would have been ample reward for him. For Francis poverty was not a privation, a sacrifice; but a treasure, a priceless pearl, which can not but be cherished for its very beauty.[2] His mind was filled with the beauty of the ideal, rather than with the distress of actual poverty. Poverty was dear to him, no matter where it came from, or in whom it was found. His brethren were often inclined to distinguish between poor and poor, as we do to-day. But Francis did not discriminate between causes, merits, and effects in poverty. Francis was an idealist and poverty was his ideal.

[1] II Cel., III, 17, 23.

[2] II Cel., III, 1–29. Bon., 88. Actus B. Franc., and Fioretti, Cap. 13.

The idealist, be he painter, poet, or reformer, proceeds by abstractions. The ideal which he has formed for himself may have its foundation in reality, but it is not the whole reality. All that may mar the beautiful picture is carefully left out. In fact there is no imitative art without a process of idealization. The painter who would attempt to reproduce in his landscape all details without discrimination, might well meet with failure, and the writer, if too realistic, may often offend the honest and delicate reader. The artist makes a careful selection, brings into light one order of facts or certain aspects of the reality which he wishes to represent. His ideal is not a mere fact, as found in nature, a reality pure and simple, but a fact divested of its grosser and less refined elements. Francis, an idealist, an artist, did not see poverty as we common mortals see it, caused by vice, intemperance, laziness; he did not see the poverty of the slums accompanied by filth and misery, resulting in despair, crime, suicide. In Francis's mind all these elements had unconsciously disappeared into the background. There remained one beautiful, idealized figure, the poverty embraced by Christ and His Apostles; the poverty abandoned, despised by an unchristian world,

but dear to a follower of Christ and of the Apostles.

Francis did not possess a speculative mind; we find in him no taste for science and learning; he saw everything in concrete images; in the same way he pictured poverty to his imagination, as a natural living being. So also, he gave a sensible form to religion, to the Church and to everything more or less abstract. Religion for him was nothing else but Christ, the Babe of Bethlehem and his "sweet Mother Mary," and the saints. The Church appeared to him in the person of the Holy Father, the bishops and the priests. What he knew of the need of reform in the Christian world was nothing other than a keenly felt contrast between Christ and the Christian of his time; Christ poor, humble, loving, suffering; the Christian of Francis's time greedy, proud, selfish, bent on pleasure. The Apostles, by their preaching and their examples had transformed the world, and Francis saw no one who would follow the Apostles, imitate their virtues, their poverty, their zeal, and save the world.

A more philosophical mind might have minimized the evil, attributed it to circumstances which time would soon alter, studied the need

of the age, tried to adapt the remedies used by Christ and the Apostles to the changed conditions of mankind. No such process takes place in Francis's mind. Christ, the Apostles, poverty, came to him as a commanding vision. Christ had said to His Apostles: "Take nothing for your journey; neither staff, nor scrip, nor money, nor bread; neither have two coats." For Francis there is no compromise. These words of the Gospel are to be taken literally, and neither he nor his disciples will have staff or scrip or money or bread or two coats.

Many did not understand him; they derided his mode of life and his practices. Many of the most eminent men of the time opposed him. He had no eyes but for his cherished ideal, for the ideal of Christ and His Apostles; he had no ears but for the voice of God manifested to him in the Gospel and in his frequent intercourse with God. He was insensible to all else,—not only to mockery and opposition, but to honors as well. His faculties were so much taken up with guarding his work, that purely human events made no impression upon him. Sometimes he seemed to be, as it were, unconscious of the excitement which his presence alone caused among the people. One day, toward the end of his life, as he was

passing through Borgo San Sepolcro, a considerable crowd soon gathered to see him. A thousand persons touched him, pushed him, pulled him in every manner; he was insensible to all this; like an inanimate body, he saw nothing, heard nothing of what was going on around him. The travelers were already far from the town, the crowd had disappeared, when Francis, as if descending from a better world, inquired of his companions whether they would soon reach Borgo San Sepolcro.

A mystic, an idealist, Francis was also a symbolist,—a feature of his character which may be counted as one of the factors of his success.

The people of that epoch were not philosophers, but rather poets. In the thirteenth century the simple people saw nothing simply as it was; every creature was the symbol of something higher.

The imaginative Francis fully shared this characteristic of the age; for him also, all outward things had an inner symbolic meaning. He understood things best by analogies taken from the material world. The poor represented to him Christ Himself; to rebuke the poor was to rebuke Christ, and to love them was to love Christ. The doves represented purity, and he

would protect them as his chaste "sisters." He could not see a lamb without thinking of the meekness and obedience of Christ. On his way to the Sultan's camp, meeting two sheep, he said immediately to his companion: "My brother, trust in the Lord. The word of the Gospel is realized in us: Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves." He would pick up carefully the letters which he found on the road, because he said they may form the name of Jesus.[1] It was also by symbols that Francis spoke to those around him, taught his novices and exercised his influence on the crowds. When he divested himself of his clothes before his father and the crowd which assisted at the judgment, this symbolic action made a deeper impression than a long discourse would have done.[2] When he ordered a brother to put a rope around his neck, and drag him half-naked to the place where criminals were executed, and to step on his prostrate form, he moved the people around him to compunction and to tears.[3] Another time, seeing Brother Elia wearing a habit of a finer material than was the custom

[1] I Cel., 80–82.
[2] I Cel., 15; II Cel., I, 7. 3 Soc., 19, 20. Bon., 20
[3] Bon., 73.

in the order, he asked him to lend him this habit. Elia did not dare to refuse, and gave it to him. Francis put it on, adjusted it carefully, and then walked around the room like a lord. Looking down on the brothers who were there, he said with a majestic air, "God have you in His keeping, my good people;" then suddenly taking on a serious air, he threw off this habit, and said to Elia, "That is how the false brothers of our order walk." Then resuming his humble and natural gait, "This," he said, "is how the real Friars Minor walk."[1]

We may well imagine how this symbolic way of acting and speaking impressed a people already inclined to see in everything the image and symbol of a great duty, of an important truth, of a supernatural fact. They had found in Francis a leader who thought like them, who understood them, and whom they understood. Not only did he put before their eyes an ideal which satisfied their longings and their best aspirations, but he presented this ideal to them in the way most calculated to make a deep and lasting impression.[2]

[1] Speculum Vitæ, 181. This narrative is not found in the early legends of the saint.

[2] Cf. in connection with this: Symbolism in Franciscan Churches. Ruskin: "Mornings in Florence."

CHAPTER III.—ST. FRANCIS AS A LEADER.

1. Confidence in His Mission.
2. Personal Influence.
3. Francis as an Organizer.
4. The Catholic Reformer.

1. A FACT which can not fail to strike the readers of the first legends of St. Francis, is the conviction which he had of a divine mission confided to him, and the consequent firmness in maintaining the ideal by which he was to fulfil that mission and reform the Church of Christ.

Francis believed in the frequent and direct intervention of God in the affairs of this world, and had an unshaken conviction that he heard God or Christ speak to him. Since the appeal of Our Lord in the church of Santo Damiano and the subsequent revelation that the words, "Go and repair my house," applied to the house of Christ,[1] Francis felt that he was charged with a

[1] Bon., 15, 16.

great mission; that he had been chosen from all others to reform the world. God sent him his first companions, and traced for the growing community their mode of life and activity. He said in his testament: "When the Lord had given me the care of my brothers, no one showed me what I should do,—but the Most High Himself revealed to me that I should live according to the form of the holy Gospel."[1]

This conviction that his mission came from God rendered him uncompromising. He would suffer no half measures. It had been revealed to him that he and his companions in their work of reform were to live in poverty, and he would not accept a candidate who had not, from the first moment, sold all his goods and given his money to the poor;[2] nor would he hear of a house being owned by the brethren, whatever might be the extenuating circumstances. His extreme severity in this respect can be accounted for only by the conviction that he was following an ideal assigned by God Himself.[3]

Only once, when he gave his resignation from

[1] Testamentum. Cf. the text in Sabatier's Spec. Perf., pp. 309–313, with parallel passages from the Speculum.

[2] Bon., 90.

[3] Spec. Perf., Cap. 6, 7.

the office of minister-general of the order at the chapter of 1220, did he show signs of discouragement in the work which God had confided to him. The unfaithfulness of a whole party of brothers to Francis's ideal, his constant infirmities, his love of humility and obedience, were the probable causes of this action.[1] We may say also that the desire to give himself entirely to his work of reform urged him to resign a function which was moreover not congenial to his nature. The office of minister-general, since the wonderful development of the order, had become too absorbing. It required not only the continual presence of the minister at the headquarters, but also a great deal of routine work and constant attention to details of administration. Such a life, aside from being distasteful to a man of Francis's fiery nature, seemed to him an obstacle to the mission he had received from God. The call he heard in the church of Santo Damiano, "Go and repair my house," was still ringing in his ears: it was not to the administrative life of a ruler that God had destined him, but to the life of an apostle.

Though he was in this frame of mind, Francis

[1] Spec. Perf., Cap. 39, 41, 71.

did not abandon the direction of the Franciscan movement. Not only did he retain, at the request of his brethren, the title of minister-general, while the acting minister bore the name of vicar-general during Francis's life, but he also continued to give to the order the general direction and proper spirit, leaving to his vicar the care of the temporal administration and of the details required by the government of so large a number of men.[1]

In fact, he consecrated his first leisure time to the composition of the rule. The circumstances which attended his work show that Francis believed more firmly than ever in a divine mission to reform the world, and wished to maintain at all costs the ideal which he had received from Heaven. The first rule or rules which had governed the order until this time (1220) had proved insufficient.[2] Controversies on different points had arisen during his trip to the Orient and had created difficulties.[3] He immediately set to work to correct the points which were

[1] Cf. for instance Francis's letter to Brother Elia, published in Sabatier's "Tractatus de Indulgentia," p. 113, and in "Opusc. S. P. Franc.," p. 108.

[2] K. Müller: "Die Anfän. des Minor.," pp. 4–25.

[3] K. Müller: op. cit., p. 10 ff. Jord. d. Gian., in "Anal. Franc.," I, pp. 4, 5, nn. 11 15.

liable to be misinterpreted and to render any misconception of his ideal impossible.

The chapter on the prohibitions of the Gospel, "Nihil tuleritis in via," had been particularly attacked by some lax religious,[1] and one of the ministers, after Francis's return, asked him what was the exact bearing of these prohibitions. Francis answered firmly: "The sense is that the brothers must have nothing except a tunic, with a cord and drawers (femoralibus), as the rule says; and in case of necessity they may wear shoes." The minister wished to obtain permission to keep a few books: "I will not," answered Francis, "I must not and I can not permit this against my conscience and the perfection of the holy Gospel which we have embraced."

Hearing that the ministers wished to have the chapter, "Nihil tuleritis," removed from the rule, he cried out before some of his brethren: "My brothers, the ministers think that they will deceive the Lord and myself; but in order that my brothers may know that they are obliged to observe the perfection of the holy Gospel, I wish that in the beginning and in the end of the rule it should be written that the brothers are

[1] Spec. Perf., Cap. 3.

bound to observe strictly the holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ; and, that my brethren may be inexcusable, I have always proclaimed, and I now proclaim, the things which the Lord has revealed to me, and which are necessary for my salvation and for theirs, and I will show them in my works, with the help of the Lord, and observe them as long as I live."[1]

Later, when he had retired to a mountain with two brothers in order to write the rule that was later approved by Honorius III, some ministers went to Brother Elia, who was then vicar-general of the order, and asked him to intervene and beg Francis not to make the rule too difficult. Elia finally consented to go with them; but when they reached the place where Francis had retired and explained to him their request, he turned towards heaven and said to Christ: "Did I not say to Thee that they would not believe me?" Then, his historians tell us, they all heard the voice of Christ saying: "Francis, there is nothing in the rule which is thine, but it is all mine, and I wish the rule to be observed to the letter, to the letter, without gloss, without gloss, without gloss. I know of what human infirmity is capable and what is the power of my assistance; let those

[1] Spec. Perf., Cap. 3.

who do not wish to observe the rule leave the order."[1]

Whether or not this supernatural intervention occurred, the fact remains that Francis did not yield, for he saw in the rule the will of God which he was commissioned to transmit to men.

Honorius III, whom Francis requested to approve the rule, considered some parts too hard for human weakness, and advised him to mitigate or change some demands, and to suppress others entirely. But he was not more successful than the Cardinal of Santo Paolo and Innocent III. When Francis presented for the first time his project of life and work to Honorius, he said: "It is not I, most blessed Father, who have put these precepts or these words in the rule, but Christ, who knows better than anyone all that is useful and necessary for the salvation of souls and of the brothers, as well as for the well-being and preservation of this order,—Christ, to whom all things which will happen in the Church and in our order are present and manifest; therefore I must not and I can not change or suppress altogether the words of Christ."[2]

[1] Spec. Perf., Cap. 1. Cf. also study on this chapter by Sabatier in Spec. Perf., p. 249.

[2] Bon., 56.

The mission which he had received was a specific one: "I do not want you to name to me any other rule," he said to his brethren in a chapter: "the rule of St. Benedict, or of St. Augustine, or of St. Bernard, or any other way or form of life besides that which has been shown and given to me by the merciful Lord. The Lord has told me that He wished us to lead this new form of life."[1]

The rule might not be changed any more than the Gospel itself: God was the author of it, Francis was only the instrument. Let the religious, the ministers, the Pope himself, attempt to mitigate it,—they are bound to fail. "Woe to those brothers who oppose me in what I know firmly to be the will of God."[2] This question, thus raised against Francis himself during his lifetime, caused a schism in the community after his death, and led to most distressing consequences. Nothing shook the determination of Francis. He was well aware of the difficulties which the rule had already caused, and he was aware of the difficulties which it would cause, since he himself had predicted the events which were soon to take place.[3] But he was doing that

[1] Spec. Perf., Cap. 68.
[2] Spec. Perf., Cap. 11.
[3] Spec. Perf., Cap. 72 and 81.

which he believed God had inspired him to do. He was accomplishing a mission received from above, and he remained inflexible.

He remained uncompromising to the end, and in his Testament, which, according to the Bull of Gregory IX, "Quo elongati," he dictated only a few days before his death, he recalled again the mission which he had received from the Most High, and the duty of all to follow the ideal which God had revealed to him: "And to my brothers, clerics and laymen, I command firmly in the name of obedience not to put any glosses on the rule or on these words, saying, It is in this way that they should be understood; but as the Lord had given me the grace to speak and to write simply and purely the rule and these words, so, also, purely and simply, you must understand them without glosses and fulfil them in holy observance unto the end."

These words had the authority of a founder and a divine legate. To add still further to the impression caused by his words, he ordered some ashes to be strewn on the floor of his cell, and then, taking off his tunic with difficulty, and assisted by his brothers, he stretched himself all naked on the floor; after a few moments of profound silence, he said to his brethren: "I

have done my work; may Christ teach you how to do yours."[1]

2. The emotional, enthusiastic, and saintly Francis was the idol of the people. He thought like them, spoke like them, acted like them; he was for them the typical Italian, with all the characteristics, the spirit, the aspirations of the time. This was naturally a source of power for Francis. Few men of the time possessed sympathetic understanding of the people, combined with energy and influence, to equal Francis. Nothing could overcome him. His power was that of a great conviction and a great ideal: the conviction of a divine mission, the ideal of poverty. Francis believed he had seen Our Lord; he had received a mission to reform the world; and, deeply impressed with the importance and greatness of the task, he felt that he was speaking in the name of God, or rather that God Himself was speaking through him. He had taken from the Gospel, from the Divine Word, the ideal to which he had consecrated himself: it was the ideal of Christ, of the Apostles; he loved it passionately, and was eager to see it admired and loved by all those around him. In a religious and ardent mind like his, such a conviction and

[1] II Cel., III, 139.

such an ideal were an extraordinary power,—a power which no human conviction, no human ideal could ever give; a power which no obstacle could check, and no heart resist.

In view of these circumstances, then, it is not surprising that success accompanied him everywhere. People found in him a leader who felt that he had a message to give to the world. He was in striking contrast with their bishop, whose sermons, generally cold and stiff, came from the head, rather than from the heart. Francis preached from the heart, and his words went to the heart. There was nothing formal, nothing official about these fervent appeals, made anywhere and at any time, and always with a power which suffered no resistance. Once, at the reiterated request of Cardinal Ugolino, he consented to prepare and preach a regular sermon before the Pope and the Roman Court. Francis, having ascended the pulpit, forgot all he had so carefully prepared, and was unable to say a word. He related in all simplicity and humility to the Pope and cardinals what had happened to him, and after having invoked the Holy Ghost, spoke so eloquently on a new subject that he moved all hearts and showed, says St. Bonaventure, "That it was not he, but the spirit of the Lord which was speaking."[1]

[1] I Cel., 72, 73. 3 Soc., 64. Bon., 178.

He had nothing new to teach men: he was convinced that God had sent him to reform the Church, not to announce new truths. What he presented to them was the old Christian ideal which men had forgotten, or rather neglected. Faith was not lacking then, and it was enough to appeal to their hearts to produce an effect. Hearts were moved at the very sight of Francis: his mission, his ideal, his holiness were written on his countenance. Sometimes the inspiration did not come, and Francis had no word to say when people assembled to hear him. On such occasions he would simply bless the people, and go.[1] His presence alone filled everyone with love for the man and for the ideal of which he was the perfect expression. But when to his external appearance was added the sweet but energetic sound of his voice,[2] expressing in fiery words the deeply felt truths, the hardest hearts melted and were bent to his will.

Nor did this wonderful power of Francis stop at the conversion of men; he possessed a no less wonderful influence over those who entrusted themselves to his care and training. In the

[1] I Cel., 72. Cf. also sermon to Poor Ladies without speaking, II Cel., III, 134.

[2] I Cel., 83.

beginning of the order there was no novitiate; the candidates were immediately received into the order, and then began active work in the field of reform. Brought under the personal influence of Francis, they soon shared his convictions, and looked upon him as the man sent by the Almighty to reform the world. They accepted his ideal and loved Lady Poverty almost as much as he did. A few words from his mouth were sufficient to revive in them their early enthusiasm when it had waned. He said, in one of those few bursts of eloquence which his historians have recorded: "My brethren, we have promised great things, we have been promised greater things,—let us keep our promises, let us sigh after God's promises. Short is the pleasure, the punishment is eternal. Small is the suffering, the glory will be infinite. All are called, few are chosen. To each one it shall be given according to his works."

If discouragement or trouble of any kind afflicted one of his brethren, "All the clouds were soon dispelled at the sound of his fiery eloquence, and all hearts became again serene."[1]

This power over his disciples was still increased by the love which he had for each one of them,

[1] I Cel., 46.

and by the readiness with which he discovered their needs, their desires, their temptations, and hastened to console or to help them.[1] It was a power which men did not try to shun, but to which they gladly submitted, because it was full of charity, love and tenderness. It is scarcely surprising that Renan spoke as he did:

"Le grand mouvement ombrien du treizième siècle . . . est, entre tous les essais de fondation religieuse celui qui ressemble le plus au mouvement galiléen . . . François d'Assise (est) l'homme du monde qui par son exquise bonté, sa communion délicate, fine et tendre avec la vie universelle, a le plus ressemblé à Jésus."[2]

3. The splendid organization of the orders created by Francis, particularly of the first and third orders, if we consider it in connection with its historical circumstances, can not fail to awaken a feeling of wonder. Compared with the powerful orders which had been the glory of the Church for centuries, the organization of the Franciscans still excites the greatest admiration. In the

[1] I Cel., 48–50; II Cel., II, 3, 11, 14, 18, 19.

[2] E. Renan: "Vie de Jésus," 12th édition, Paris, 1864, p. 183. Cf. also "St. Paul," p. 569. "Nouvelles études religieuses," Paris, 1884, pp. 334, 335.

first order the institution of the general chapters for government, the election to the various offices without discrimination for or against members, whatsoever may have been their origin or their class before joining the order, are worthy of note. Those who ruled were called ministers by Francis, as it was intended that they should be really the servants of all. In the Third Order, the minister and members of the directory received their appointment and authority from the members. That these provisions were wise is shown in the actual success of the government of the body in each country of Europe, in the victorious resistance offered against attacks coming from the lords, and too often from the clergy, until then the ruling parties of the world.[1]

We are naturally led to ask: To whom shall we give the credit of this extraordinary organization, which was to resist the storms of centuries? Some claim that Francis was not only a born leader but also a sagacious administrator,

[1] E. Gebhart: "L'Italie mystique," pp. 127, 213. A. Harnack: "Das Mönchtum, seine Ideale und seine Geschichte." Eng. ed., 1895, pp. 67–83. A. Cantono: "S. Francesco d'As. e la democrazia cristiana." Gino Capponi: "Storia di Firenze," p. 180. P. Mandonnet: "Les Règles et le Gouvernement de l'Ordo de Pœnitentia," Chap. II.

almost a statesman; or, at least, that he himself organized the Franciscan orders and directed the movement in the beginning of the thirteenth century.[1] Others have attributed to the Church the organization and direction of these orders, but they affirm at the same time that the intervention of the Church took place against Francis's will, thwarted his plans of reform, and largely impeded the beneficial results of the movement.[2]

The truth seems to be between these extremes. Francis did not possess the talent of organization; and, when he realized the need of organization, he not only allowed, but even begged, the Church to supply what was lacking in himself.

Francis was indeed a leader of men in the sense that he was full of enthusiasm and had the power to communicate his enthusiasm to others. The wonderful success of his orders, which revolutionized a large part of Europe in the beginning of the thirteenth century, is proof sufficient of his popular power. But this does not necessarily imply power of organization. The organizer must possess a clear view of the end to be attained, of its relations, resources and

[1] Karl Hase, Fred. Morin; also many Catholic writers.

[2] Thode, Sabatier, and most Protestant writers after them.

resistance, the adaptation of means; as also power of execution, keen appreciation of the circumstances of time and place, and good judgment of men in whom to trust. The leader must be able not only to convince, to infuse his enthusiasm into others, but also to govern them, to restrain them when over-confident, to incite them when relaxing, to maintain order and discipline.

Peter the Hermit and St. Bernard stirred up the people, and raised an enthusiasm which has perhaps rarely been equaled; but they lacked the power of organization, and they failed in their crusades. Pierre Waldo was an enthusiast, but the movement which he started soon degenerated into heresy and revolt; he lacked the practical talent to discipline men. The ardent and stubborn Luther started the movement of the Reformation, but it took the genius of Calvin to give it some theological coherence and firmer organization.

Francis originated a great movement, and filled with enthusiasm all those around him. But he lacked the practical talent of organization. He was the originator of the Franciscan movement of the thirteenth century; but the Church put order and discipline into the movement, and directed it in its mission. Francis, before his

conversion, was only a clever thirteenth-century merchant and a pleasure-seeking young man.[1] His reform movement, once inaugurated, was to embrace the whole world; yet he was conscious of no fear; wise in temporal affairs, he became foolish in God's service. It is true "That which appeareth foolish of God is wiser than men,"[2] and that many of the methods of Francis, foolish in our eyes, obtained for him a success of which, humanly speaking, they gave no promise. However, judging Francis here as we would judge any social reformer, we must incline to the view that he did not possess the talent of organization, the practical sense of a good administrator.

Before going to Rome to apply for the approbation of the Pope, Francis wrote a rule for his first companions. This rule is lost; but we know it was only a collection of Gospel maxims and counsels, arranged under a few headings, and supplemented by a few directions.[3] The idea of Francis was to make Christ Himself the rule: Christ's words would be the words of the rule, which thus would carry in itself its own

[1] I Cel., 2.

[2] 1 Cor. i.

[3] I Cel., 32. Bon., 34. Cf. Müller: "Die Anfänge des Minoritenordens," I, 1. Die angeblich erste Regel, pp. 4–14.

sanction. Yet the advisability of composing the rule of life of a developing community from Gospel texts, which are generally of difficult interpretation, is not beyond question. In fact, in his subsequent rules, Francis omitted more and more the quotations from the Gospel and reduced the evangelical maxims to more precise formulas.

As soon as Francis had gathered a few companions, he sent them out to preach penance and peace. No one knew where they were to go; they were sent out "into the four parts of the world." Abandoning themselves to luck, or rather, to the inspirations of God, as they believed, they traveled without any fixed itinerary. They did not, and should not, trouble themselves about food or shelter. Francis had said to each one of them: "My brother, leave all cares to God; He will provide for your needs."[1] He had appointed to them no time for returning from their apostolic mission. When he wished to see them again, he prayed to God that He might inspire them with the idea of coming back to St. Mary of the Angels. There was indeed faith, but scarcely human prudence, in such a course of action.[2]

[1] I Cel., 29. Bon., 33.
[2] I Cel., 30. Bon., 33.

So far no urgent need for a strong organization had been felt. The little company counted only a few members, who had all the fervor of youth, and if trouble or discouragement harassed any one, Francis always had the right word and the right remedy.

But, in course of time, the number of his followers increased; they became popular, and new postulants arrived every day. Stronger organization was necessary, as well as stronger discipline. Francis had become almost unconsciously the head of a numerous and promiscuous crowd. Lords and serfs, merchants and craftsmen, brigands and saints, poets and lawyers, priests and laymen, beggars and chevaliers, had joined the order by the hundreds: it required a firm and skilful hand to govern and direct such an assemblage.

Yet, at this very moment, Francis meditated an apostolic mission to the Orient. His enthusiasm carried the day, and he actually left for the East.[1] It is true he confided the government of the order to Pietro di Catania, a doctor in law, and well informed in this branch.[2] But it

[1] I Cel., 55. Bon., 129.

[2] Jord. d. Giano, in "An. Franc.," n. 11, p. 4, T. I. Cf. Sabatier's Spec. Perf., p. 70, note.

seems little in conformity with the rules of human prudence for a founder to abandon his order to strange hands at the very time of its greatest development, when there was the greatest need to give to the young company the proper spirit and the proper direction. This was in 1213, four years after the foundation, and Francis left then for a distant country, hoping perhaps to meet there the death of a martyr.

Contrary winds threw the ship on the coast of Illyria. After some days' delay, Francis, seeing that there was no hope of reaching the Orient, returned to Assisi. But again the love of apostolic labors and the desire of martyrdom got the better of him, and he departed for Morocco. He did not go beyond Spain, returning on account of sickness.[1]

It was nearly a year since he had left Santa Maria degli Angeli. During that time, and under the administration of Pietro di Catania, a large stone house had been erected by the people of Assisi for the new order. Francis was deeply affected by an action which marked a departure from his spirit and from the direction which he wished to give the new order.[2] It seems that he

[1] I Cel., 56. Bon., 132. Wadd., an. 1213, n. 58.
[2] Spec. Perf., Cap. 7.

should have profited by the lesson and understood the necessity of his presence and of his immediate direction. Yet, soon after the chapter of Pentecost of the same year (1215) he departed again, this time for France. When he reached Florence, Cardinal Ugolino, who understood better the needs of the rising order, prevailed upon him not to leave Italy at a time when his presence was so necessary. Francis, always respectful towards the prelates of the Church, having remained some time in Florence to treat with the cardinal concerning the interests of the order, finally returned to Assisi.[1]

New disappointments awaited him there, which were in great part the consequences of faults of administration. The brothers whom he had sent to the four corners of the world, animated with the same enthusiasm which filled him, were now returning by little bands, disheartened. Neither they nor Francis had foreseen all the difficulties of a mission in foreign countries: being ignorant of the language, they were not understood, nor could they understand; their strange manners excited not edification, but ridicule.[2] No one had foreseen that the source

[1] I Cel., 74, 75.

[2] 3 Soc., 62. Wadd., an. 1216, n. 9. Jord. d. Giano, in "An. Franc.," T. I, n. 5, p. 3.

of their success in Italy, simplicity, poverty, childlike manners, might be a cause of failure in other countries, when not adapted to the changed circumstances. The missionaries were taken for heretics, as they had not even letters to prove their orthodoxy.

Francis understood then the necessity of a strong hand to guide the order, and recognized his own inability to discipline and direct it. He began to think there were too many Friars Minor: "Oh, if it were possible," he said, "that the world, seeing the Brothers only very seldom, should wonder at their little number."

He saw in a dream a hen which tried in vain to shelter under her wings her too numerous progeny, and immediately applying the vision to himself, he exclaimed: "Therefore, I will go and confide to the holy Roman Church my little chickens (pullos meos) whom I can no longer protect."[1] In compliance with his request, a Cardinal Protector was appointed, whose office it was, according to Francis, "to govern, protect and correct the order."[2]

Perhaps Francis relied too much on the Cardinal Protector for the work of administra-

[1] II Cel., I, 16. | 3 Soc., 63.
[2] Testamentum.

tion.[1] On the occasion of the general chapter in 1219, relying on the goodness of divine Providence, he neglected to make provision for the support of 5,000 brothers present.[2] Immediately thereafter, Francis, carried away by his enthusiasm, left for Egypt.[3] It was a fault which he soon recognized. The rumor spread in Italy that Francis was dead: it was the signal for disorder. A chapter was convoked in which, contrary to custom, only part of the brethren participated. They decreed some changes in the rule, particularly the introduction of fast-days, which was contrary to Francis's spirit. At the same time, Brother Philippo had obtained from Rome several privileges for the Order of the Poor Ladies, and also modifications in their rule, all of which was against the spirit of Francis. Again, Giovanni di Capella, one of the first companions of the saint, had already taken steps to found a new order in which the lepers themselves would be admitted, and the rule had been presented to the Pope for approbation.

[1] I Cel., 74: "Tamquam unicus matris suæ, securus in sinu clementiæ suæ dormiens et quiescens."

[2] Bon., 52.

[3] Bon., 129.

[4] Cf. Müller: "Die Anfänge des Minoritenordens," p. 63 ff.

Francis returned to Italy and endeavored to suppress the innovations. The spirit of change had crept in, however, and from it developed a tendency entirely opposed to the views of Francis. The division of the order into two branches, the Spirituals and the Conventuals, traces its origin here. Francis never ceased to protest against the new spirit, but he was not powerful enough to hinder it from spreading.

After his return from Egypt he resigned as minister-general, and appointed Pietro di Catania to fill this office. Pietro belonged to the first disciples of Francis, and represented his spirit well: but he died the following year (1221). Francis appointed the famous Elia di Cortona minister-general. He was greatly deceived in his judgment of this man, who lost no time in opposing St. Francis's ideal and modifying the work of the order, and finally gave the scandal of revolt and apostasy.[1]

From that time till his death, in 1224, Francis took little share in the administration of the order,[2] though he never again left Italy. He remained chiefly at Santa Maria degli Angeli,

[1] Ed. Lempp: "Frère Elie de Cortone," Paris, 1901.

[2] Cf. Letter of Francis to Elia in Sabatier's "Indulg. de Port.," pp. 113, 121 ff.

and continued until the last to protest against the innovations made. The situation was beyond his control. Not even the vigorous attempt made in his Testament to recall the ideal for which the order had come into existence, availed to prevent the crisis that came soon after his death.

It is said the curia was largely responsible for the difficulties which arose during Francis's absence in 1219. Cardinal Ugolino had been protector of the order for some time, hence he could not be a stranger to the different changes then taking place in the first order and in the Order of the Poor Ladies. We know in fact that he was to a certain extent responsible for these changes.[1] It is probable also that, after the death of Pietro di Catania, Cardinal Ugolino had something to do with the appointment of Brother Elia as vicar-general, for Francis would not have taken such an important step without the advice of the Cardinal Protector; we know also from the Cardinal's own words that when Elia was reappointed after Francis's death, it was through his instrumentality. So it would be unfair to lay all the blame of the first appointment on Francis.

[1] Cf. Sabatier's Spec. Perf., p. cii ff.

The ecclesiastical advisers and protectors of the movement may have committed faults as well as Francis. Yet we must, at the same time, give them credit for what they did in favor of the Franciscan movement. Undoubtedly, they had in this movement a share greater than is generally supposed. The young and emotional Francis had awakened enthusiasm and inaugurated the work; but the representatives of the experience and the old traditional wisdom of the Church, in which reason, cautious and provident, rather than imagination and youth, ruled, lent to it consistency and order.

But before developing this thought, we may draw a few conclusions suggested by the facts related in this section.

Francis did not possess talent for organization. It was no easy task to maintain order among so many men and to direct them towards such a high ideal as he had set up for them. The absence of the qualities which would have been needed in such circumstances, appears as the natural consequence of the idealistic, mystic, emotional, and enthusiastic character of Francis; the talent of administration required reason rather than imagination, reflection and prudence more than enthusiasm.

Francis was a man of strong faith. He relied for success not on human methods, but exclusively on Providence; and he recommended to his disciples not to care for the morrow, but to trust in God. The supernatural played an important part in St. Francis's life; and he certainly thought that faith, love of Christ, trust in the Creator and Provider of all, availed more than any efforts of men.

Francis could not see the logic of a course combining human with divine wisdom. An attempt to assure through human means the preservation and success of his order, would have been, in his eyes, a crime. Keeping this in mind, we can not wonder that Francis cared little for a form of organization which would have made his order too much like those already existing, and that he had recourse to it by necessity and not by choice.

It must not be forgotten that it is largely the contrast with older orders, the simplicity of the first Franciscans, the absence of all formality, and of everything having a tendency to attract respect more than popularity, which explain the earlier success of the movement. But this very success made organization necessary. Without it, there was no possibility of keeping within the

right bounds, and directing, a large number of men, and a stronger hand than that of Francis became a necessity.

Moreover, Francis's plan of reform contemplated mainly the reform of the individual. He aimed at the individual, and only through the individual at society and the Christian Church. His order, as he intended it, was simply a collection of men carrying into practice as perfectly as possible the principles of the Gospel. Believing in the reform of the individual as the only means of reforming society, he depended on the influence of man on man to obtain the end in view. Hence, the thought of an order acting on society was far from his mind. He saw only the poor Friar, in his poor clothes and his simplicity, converting the peasant and the lord, the artisan and the merchant, and all his efforts were directed to the training of good Friars. Though he had a great personal power over individuals, when they became too numerous, and personal influence on them became impossible, difficulties arose. Then the need of organization was felt. Organization was not a part of Francis's ideal, nor of his plans for the reform of the Christian world. The Church, at the demand of Francis, intervened and brought to the movement order and method,

and thus insured the success of the Franciscan movement.

4. It would be beside the present purpose to go at length into the question of the relations between Francis and the Church. The works of Sabatier and Thode[1] have given rise to an immense amount of literature on this subject.[2] A short review of these relations will demonstrate two points connected with the character of Francis as a reformer: that Francis was before all a most devoted son of the Catholic Church; and that the Church supplied largely, in the Franciscan movement, what Francis lacked—method and system.

Francis, educated by a Catholic mother in the very center of Catholicism, remained all his

[1] P. Sabatier: "Vie de St. François d'Assise," "Speculum Perfectionis," etc. . . . H. Thode: "Franz von Assisi und die Anfänge der Kunst der Renaissance in Italien," Berlin, 1885.

[2] Cf. for example: "St. François et l'Eglise" in "Rev. des Quest. Hist.," Vol. 57, pp. 210–229. "St. François d'Assise d'après son dernier historien" in "Vingtième Siècle," 1894, p. 53, with answer by Sabatier in same. R. Mariano: "Francesco d'Assisi, e alcuni dei suoi più recenti biografi." X. "Le relazioni con la Chiesa." Fr. Paschal Robinson: "The Real St. Francis," "The teaching of St. Francis of Assisi and its latest interpreters," etc.

life a most faithful subject of the Catholic Church. Any impartial reader of the first legends of the saint, whether written by the Spirituals or by the partisans of Brother Elia, will find at every step new proofs of this perfect and sincere submission of Francis to the Church, which he called lovingly "his Mother,"[1] and to her ministers, in whom he saw the representatives of God on earth.[2]

Before he embraced the apostolic life he made a pilgrimage to Rome, the center of Catholicism, and there bestowed a generous offering on the tomb of the Apostles. It was in Rome, too, that he put on for the first time the habit of a beggar and took his place among the poor that crowded the porch of St. Peter's to solicit the alms of the pilgrims. On his return to Assisi it was to the bishop that he confided the inspirations which he had received from God and his plans for the future.[3]

As soon as he had gathered a few companions, he said to them: "I see, my brethren, that God in His mercy wishes to increase our company. Let us therefore go to our Mother, the holy Roman Church, and announce to the Sovereign

[1] 3 Soc., 46. Spec. Perf., Cap. 78.
[2] Testamentum. Spec. Perf., Cap.10, 55.
[3] 3 Soc., 35.

Pontiff what the Lord has begun to do through us, that we may achieve what we have undertaken according to His will and by His command."[1] This step was the more remarkable, as there was then no law obliging the religious orders to solicit a formal approbation from Rome.

During all his life, Francis never took any important step in his reform movement without first asking the approval of the Church. When he wished to sail for Egypt he first went to Rome and begged Innocent III to bless his enterprise.[2] He humbly submitted to the counsels of Cardinal Ugolino when the latter opposed his trip to France; and it was in order to practise better this absolute submission to the Church, that he asked the Sovereign Pontiff to appoint a protector of the order who would represent the Church.

He frequently recommended submission not only to the Sovereign Pontiff and the Cardinal Protector of the order, but also to all bishops and priests. His brethren were obliged to ask the approval of the ordinary of any place where they were about to establish a convent, or to preach.[3] Their object was to assist the clergy

[1] 3 Soc., 46.
[2] Wadd., an. 1212, n. 35.
[3] Spec. Perf., Cap. 10, 50.

in their work, but this they were to do in all humility.[1] They should respect even the poorest priests as their masters.[2]

In his definitive rule he recommended to them that they should always be "submissive and subject to the holy Roman Church, prostrate at her feet, and steadfast in the Catholic faith."[3]

Nor did this love of Francis for the Church and her ministers ever decrease, for, a few days before his death he wrote in his Testament: "The Lord gave me, and gives me, on account of their order, so great a faith in priests who live according to the rules of the holy Roman Church, that, even if they persecuted me, I would have recourse to them . . . however poor they may be, I would not preach against their will. I wish to fear, love, and honor them, and all others as my lords, and I will not consider sin in them, because I see in them the Son of God and because they are my masters. . . ."[4]

Sentiments more Catholic could not be expressed, and to pretend to see in Francis any-

[1] Spec. Perf., Cap. 54.
[2] Spec. Perf., Cap. 10.
[3] Regula 2a, Cap. xii.
[4] Testamentum.

thing but a most strictly Catholic reformer would be a gross historical error. Francis's language and conduct in this respect can not leave room for the slightest doubt.

Nor is this conduct a mere expression of the ideas or customs of the time: most of the reformers in St. Francis's time acted not only without the approbation of the Church, but in direct opposition to her.

The Franciscan reform movement, on the contrary, was the joint work of Francis and the Church,—Francis contributing the enthusiasm, the Church giving method and order; Francis offering to the depraved world an ideal, the Church reducing this ideal to practice.

The first official act of the Church in connection with the movement of reform contemplated by Francis, took place when he went to Rome with his first companions to ask the approbation of his rule and his enterprise. The hesitation of Innocent III has been interpreted by most non-Catholic historians as the first obstruction thrown by the Church in the way of the Franciscan movement. Yet his hesitation seems not only justified by the circumstances, but suggested by a consummate prudence, and later developments have shown how wise was the conduct

of the Pontiff: "My sons," he had said to Francis and his companions, "the life which you wish to lead seems to be very hard and rigorous. Your fervor, I know, is so great that I can not doubt your perseverance. But we must also think about those who will come after you, and we must be careful not to impose on them obligations which they would not be able to carry."[1] It seems as if the experienced Pontiff had foreseen the troubles which were to arise from the difficulties of Francis's ideal and rule, and we can only admire his wisdom, if, delaying to a further time the official approval of the order, he wished to see first how this ideal would work in practice.

The Cardinal of Santo Paolo assisted Francis in these first negotiations, and gave him important advice concerning the direction of the order. Later, this counsel was given by Cardinal Ugolino at the demand of Francis. "Without the Cardinal of Santo Paolo," says the Abbé Le Monnier,[2] "the order of the Friars Minor would perhaps never have come into existence; but undoubtedly, it would never have developed and would have hardly subsisted without Cardinal Ugolino."

[1] 3 Soc., 49.

[2] "Vie de St. François d'Assise," Paris, 1890, Vol. I, p. 339.

The Cardinal acted wisely in opposing Francis's trip to France at a time when his presence was so much needed at headquarters.

Again, the Protector of the order was present at the chapter of the Mats, in 1219, and took an active part in the deliberations. The brethren sent to foreign countries had, as we have seen, failed in their efforts. He obtained for them from the Pope official letters addressed "To the Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, Deans, Archdeacons, and other ecclesiastical Superiors," to all of whom the brethren were recommended as good Catholics, and members of an order approved by the Church. By this means many misunderstandings were avoided which had been the greatest cause of failure until then.[1]

At the chapter of St. Michael, the next year, a Papal brief was read enjoining on all the guardians of the order not to admit any one to profession until after one year's probation; and, after profession, no one was allowed to leave the order. This was a wise precaution; as, until then, all sorts of characters had been received into the order, with little or no probation,—a process which in the beginning had been successful, thanks to the personal influence of

[1] Bullar. Francisc., T. I, p. 2.

Francis and the fervor of the little band whose life was a continual novitiate. But the increase of the order demanded a more careful selection and preparation of subjects, and the measure enjoining this came from Rome most likely on Ugolino's suggestion.[1]

That Cardinal Ugolino had also an important share in the preparation and approbation of the definitive rule, we know from his own words in the Bull "Quo elongati," which he wrote when Pope under the name of Gregory IX.[2]

But if it is through the Third Order that the Franciscan reform movement became popular, and produced its most practical results, it is also there that we see most clearly the influence of the Church. Until lately, the origin of the Third Order was almost unknown. The first biographers of the saint, who mention its existence only incidentally, did not offer any precise information on its origin. The rule printed among the works of St. Francis was evidently not the original one, but was the rule approved by Nicholas IV in 1289.[3]

[1] Bullar. Francisc., T. I, pp. 19, 27.

[2] Cf. Sabatier's "Spec. Perf.," p. 314.

[3] P. Mandonnet: "Les origines de l'Ordre de Pœnitentia," "Les Règles et le Règlement de l'Ordre de Pœnitentia." P. Sabatier: "Regula Antiqua Fratrum et Sororum de Pœnitentia."

In the "Liber de Laudibus Beati Francisci," written by Bernardo da Bessa, companion or secretary of St. Bonaventure, and edited for the first time in 1897, we read the following, which shows well the share of Ugolino in the organization of the Third Order, and needs no commentary: "In the composing of the rules and form of life of these (Brothers of the Third Order), the Lord Pope Gregory of holy memory, then constituted in a lower dignity (when cardinal) and bound by ties of intimate friendship with Blessed Francis, supplied devoutly what the holy man lacked in the science of redaction."[1]

Again, in the history of the Third Order by Mariano di Fiorenza[2] (who belongs, it is true, to the sixteenth century, but who had, according to P. Sabatier, the advantage of working on documents which have not come down to us), we find this testimony, which confirms the information given by Bernardo da Bessa: "After having prayed and being filled with the divine spirit, assisted by the counsels and help of the Lord Cardinal Ugolino, Cardinal of Ostia, who was

[1] Bern. d. Bessa: "Liber de Laudibus S. Francisci," curante P. Hilarino a Lucerna, Romæ, 1897, Cap. vii, p. 75.

[2] In P. Sabatier's "Tractatus de Indulg. Port.," Paris, 1900, pp. 137–163.

later Pope Gregory IX, he (Francis) composed and wrote a short form of life (for the Third Order) in fourteen chapters.[1] . . St. Francis remained with the Cardinal for the composition of this rule and told him what the spirit suggested to him, and the Cardinal wrote with his own hands and added a few things."[2]

These words tell us what were the respective rôles of the Church and of Francis in the creation of the Third Order, and in the reform movement which followed. When Pope Gregory IX protected the serfs against their lords by declaring the members of the Third Order free from oath and military service and entitled to all the privileges of religious,[3] he was only carrying out a policy which he had carefully laid out with his friend Francis; the latter suggested, while he himself tested, corrected and approved, and we may well believe the historian of St. Francis when he wrote: "Beatus pater (Franciscus) necessaria providebat, sed felix Dominus (Cardinalis) illa provisa effectui mancipabat."[4]

[1] On number of chapters cf. P. Mandonnet: "Les règles, etc. . . .," p. 230 ff.

[2] P. Sabatier: "Tractat. de Ind.," p. 161.

[3] Bullar. Franc., pp. 30, 65.

[4] I Cel., 74.

PART III
THE IDEAS OF ST. FRANCIS ON SOCIAL REFORM

CHAPTER I.—COMPREHENSIVE REFORM.

THE success of Francis as a social reformer is largely accounted for by his personality. He was admired and loved by the people among whom he lived and worked: they saw in him the true Italian, as well as the saint; his emotional, idealistic, and mystic nature captivated them; they believed in the mission which he had received from Heaven and which he accomplished with so much conviction and enthusiasm, but also with so much simplicity and love.

Yet, however popular the reformer may have been, his success would have been of short duration had not his reform ideas been acceptable. The need of a reform and the striving for an ideal of reform could not be satisfied with empty words of enthusiasm alone. Eccentric reformers were abundant in the Middle Ages, and they traveled from East to West and from North to South, under the name of troubadours, jongleurs, or pilgrims, denouncing the evils of society but offering no hope; history has not even

recorded their names, except in a few isolated cases. Others, prominent among whom were the Albigenses and the Waldenses, endeavored to organize movements. But the people of the thirteenth century were not to be satisfied by the first reform proposed. They were young and enthusiastic, it is true, and they seized eagerly any project which might give them the hope of a reform; but they were quick to discover illusions. Francis, however, brought them the reform which satisfied their aspirations, and which was accepted not only by the Umbrian peasants, but by all classes and in all countries of Europe as well as in Italy, and which brought about a social amelioration that lasted as long as the ideal on which it was based preserved its original purity in the minds and conduct of the people.

It may seem strange to speak of Francis's social ideas. The reformer of our time has the advantage of definite knowledge of social facts, social conditions, social evils, and partial and supposed remedies. Social processes are well understood, and the real nature of social conditions is recognized in a manner far more objective than in the thirteenth century. Though St. Francis was keenly sensitive to the misfor-

tunes which he witnessed, he had little social knowledge, less social experience, and practically no understanding of the ordinary processes of life. We can expect in him no complex reasoning, no formulation of far-reaching laws, no grasp of institutional processes. By a simple process of mind, he saw, in concrete images, God, the soul, the Church, the devil, sin; no other more elaborate plan of action suggested itself to him. He made a simple appeal to the will of those who did not live up to the standard of Christian life.

Hence, it is evident that we may not expect to find anywhere in Francis's writings and sayings, or in the writings of those who knew him and heard him, any exposition of his views on reform. Still less can we say that Francis had no particular social principles or views; his whole life and work show in him the presence of well-anchored convictions; the ready acceptance of Francis's reform by his contemporaries and the rejection of all others show that there were in his manner of reform ideas and principles which gave to it a solid foundation. A brief study of his work reveals an interesting and consistent set of views, probably to a large extent unconsciously held by our reformer. We

will attempt to discover these principles in his actions, in the practices which he recommended, and in the institutions which he founded.

The reform of the Christian world was not the sole aim of Francis. His ambition went still further, and embraced all mankind; heathens as well as Christians were to feel the influence of his reform. It was in intention an international movement. We have seen Francis traveling not only through Italy, but through Spain, France, and even as far as Egypt and Palestine; and if he did not go still farther, it is because he was prevented from so doing by his infirmities and by the counsels of Cardinal Ugolino, the Protector of the order, whom Francis humbly considered as his superior. Unable to go himself and preach to all conversion and reform, he sent his brethren to all parts of the world.

However, he wished his personal influence as well to reach all men. Hence, he wrote circular letters and caused them to be carried, read, copied and distributed by his brethren and others to the people of the most distant regions. We have two letters of Francis addressed to "All Christians, religious, priests, laymen and women, and to all who dwell in the world." "I, being

the servant of all," he says, in the second of these letters, "am bound to serve all and to minister to all the most sweet words of my Lord. Wherefore, considering in my mind that on account of my infirmities and the weakness of my body, I can not visit personally each one, I desire by this letter to announce unto you the words of my Lord Jesus Christ, who is the eternal Word of the Father, and also the words of the Holy Ghost, which are spirit and life."[1]

Besides these general letters, Francis addressed others to those who could have a greater influence in the reform which he contemplated, or who needed special advice.

One is addressed "To my Reverend Masters, all the Clerics of the whole world, who live according to the rules of the Catholic faith, little brother Francis, their least servant, greeting with all reverence, and kissing their feet."[2]

Another he addressed "To all those who are in authority, to counselors, judges, governors in all parts of the world, and to all others whom these letters may reach."[3] To all, clerics and

[1] "Opuscula S. P. Franc." Quaracchi, 1904, Epist. 1a. In the old ed. Ep. 1a et 2a.

[2] "Beat. P. Franc. Ass. Op." Epist. 13a; left out of the Quaracchi edition.

[3] "Opuscula S. P. Franc." Quaracchi, 1904, Epist. 4a.

faithful, rulers and subjects, he gave advice appropriate to their position and their office.

The Franciscans were preëminently the apostles of the working people. Yet we must be careful not to limit their influence to a certain class of society. The Franciscans came from every class of society and went to every class of society. The first companion of Francis was Bernardo, one of the rich men of Assisi;[1] his second companion was a canon of the Church;[2] another, Brother Pacificus, was a professional poet and "laureate troubadour of Frederick II;"[3] Brother Angelo Tancredi was a knight;[4] Brother Giovanni, a farmer,[5] etc., etc. Their field of action also included all society—they visited not only farmers and townspeople, but also the clergy and the lords. Like the troubadours, they went to the castles, into the very halls where the lord and his guests were rejoicing amidst all the bright lights, rich ornaments, sumptuous furniture; there the Franciscans felt at home as well as in the hovels of the poor; there they preached the word of God and reform, and often with wonder-

[1] I Cel., 24. 3 Soc., 27. Bon., 28.
[2] Wadd., an. 1209, n. 9.
[3] Bon., 50, 51.
[4] Wadd., an. 1210, n. 3.
[5] Wadd., an. 1215, n. 5.

ful success. We know also that their preferred waiting-places, besides the lazar-houses, were the houses of the priests, "poor or rich, good or wicked," and that they swept the churches and cared for the altar-linen and everything that was used in the sacrifice of the Mass.[1]

Their simple and cheerful way was successful with all. "Their penetrating words went to the hearts of all, young and old; and those who heard them, leaving father and mother and all they possessed, followed the brothers and took the habit of the order. Not only the men were converted, but women, virgins and widows, touched by the preaching of the brothers, entered the convents which had been built for them in the towns and villages. In the same way, married women and men, not being able to dissolve the bond of marriage which united them, subjected themselves in their own houses to a life of penance still more severe. It is in this way," add the Three Companions, "that by the Blessed Francis, the perfect worshipper of the Blessed Trinity, the Church of God was restored through the three orders which he had instituted."[2] There was not a class of society which

[1] 3 Soc., 59. Bern. da Bessa: "Liber de Laudibus," Cap. 2.

[2] 3 Soc., 60.

could not find in one of these three orders a life of perfection appropriate to its condition, and to the fervor of the individuals. Priests, knights, princes, left everything and joined the first order. Virgins and widows of all conditions entered the convents of the Poor Ladies. But the vast majority of the Christian world were bound by ties and duties which did not allow them to give up everything and embrace the life of a Friar Minor or of a Poor Lady. Francis understood it, and could not suffer such an immense number of Christians to escape his influence. Hence he instituted the Third Order, into which thousands of Christians flocked from all classes, from all conditions, from all countries, rich and poor, married and single, artisans and farmers, merchants and princes.

Francis's object in his reform work was universal. It included at the same time all social aspects, as well as all men. Francis was neither a politician nor an economist; yet the reform of both the political and the economic orders was within the bounds of his zeal and ambition. It was an integral reform, embracing all the activities of man. Francis's object being to bring peace and happiness to all, he could not allow any misery to be unrelieved; and if the serfs

suffered under the political domination of the lords, if the lords abused the power which the feudal system had laid in their hands, if the poor were oppressed by the rich, if the working classes were the mere tools of the land-owners, Francis, faithful to his mission, would go to all, console, encourage, strengthen, assist all, and communicate to all his joy and his spirit.

To express the same thought in a way which was perhaps nearer to Francis's own conception, his object was to reform not only all men, but the entire man. We distinguish in man the natural and the supernatural element, the spiritual and the material. Francis had no philosophical view of these distinctions. He saw everything in concrete pictures, and his view of the soul and body was most concrete. For him the body was a cell in which the soul lived like a hermit; the body was a servant and the soul the master.[1] Yet both had their rights, and at the end of his life Francis reproached himself with having perhaps been too hard on his brother the body. In his reform, the material part of man had a share as well as the spiritual and supernatural part. The lepers were the first unfortunates who received Francis's cares, and he always had the

[1] II Cel., III, 69. Spec. Perf., Cap. 97.

greatest love for those subject to physical suffering. In all his rules there is a special article for the care of sick members.[1] We have seen all he did for the lepers himself, what he did through his brethren and the members of the Third Order, and we know how he loved to relieve the poor in their wants, giving to one the alms he had just received, to another his cloak,[2] or the only New Testament which the community owned.[3]

Brother the body was the creature of God, and as such, had all Francis's sympathy. Yet, in his mind, it was always subordinate to the higher power in man,—the soul. God had created the body for the soul, the cell for the hermit, the servant for the master. Francis understood instinctively, or rather saw,—to speak more in accordance with his mystical process of mind,—the dignity of the human soul. Through the body he tried to reach the soul. The body was to be kept in subjection or nourished according to the needs of the soul. When he blamed his brethren for having refused an alms to the

[1] Reg. 1a, Cap. x; Reg. 2a, Cap. vi; Reg. Stæ. Claræ, Cap. viii (this rule not in the Quaracchi edition). Reg. Ant. Tertii Ordinis (Sabatier), Cap. viii.

[2] II Cel., III, 30-34. Bon., 108. Spec. Perf., Cap. 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 63.

[3] II Cel., III, 35. Spec. Perf., Cap. 38.

brigands, it was because he saw in the alms the first step toward spiritual reform: "Go and get some good bread and good wine and bring them to these brigands. Call them, 'Brother Brigands, come to us, for we are all brethren, and we bring you good bread and good wine.' Then you will prepare the table and serve them with humility and cordiality. After the meal you will announce to them the word of God, and ask them to promise you for the love of God not to strike or hurt any one. On account of your humility and the charity you will show them, they will immediately promise you."[1]

Yet again, Francis subordinated the natural to the supernatural, and his ultimate end was the conversion to God and to grace. Speaking to the same brethren who had refused an alms to the brigands, he added: "The next day after having obtained their promise not to hurt any one, you will bring them, besides the bread and the wine, some cheese and some eggs, and after having served them at the meal, you will say to them: 'Why do you stay here all day, dying with hunger, suffering, doing evil, and at the same time losing your soul? Why not be converted? It

[1] Spec. Perf., Cap. 66. Actus B. Franc., Cap. 29. Fioretti, Cap. 26.

is better to serve God, and besides giving you what is necessary for your body, He will save your souls.'"[1]

Francis saw, not by any philosophical process, but by intuition, the perfect order which must exist in nature: over all, God and the supernatural world; in man the spiritual part, and subject to it, the material part; below man all creation made to subserve man's wants and to bring him to happiness and to God. He saw, at the same time, that no reform could be thorough unless it affected man in all his relations. Hence, he set to work to accomplish a comprehensive reform, but he never lost sight of the respective importance of these relations. The body must remain subject to the soul and help the soul to reach its end; and if physical sufferings are worthy of Francis's sympathy and cares, he also intended that the body must suffer sometimes for the good of the soul. Francis was the first to give the example of bodily mortification and to recommend it to his brethren. In the same way he aimed at economic and political reform; but it was only to bring peace to men, and in this way to eliminate the elements of enmity, hatred, revenge, which are contrary to

[1] Spec. Perf., Cap. 66. Act., Cap. 29. Fior., Cap. 26.

the Christian spirit that Christ had come to instil into the world, and which Francis had now the mission to renew.

This comprehensive view of reform, instinctive in Francis, is well worthy of our attention. It was a novelty in the history of reform, although not new, since it was only the Gospel view, which, in fact, Francis simply taught. Other religious orders had been founded for special and limited purposes:—for hospitals, for the reform of monastic life, for the care of pilgrims, for the reform of the clergy, etc.;—it was only one particular class or one particular aspect of man which was aimed at. The Franciscan ambition had no other limits than those of the created world; it aimed at reforming all men and every thing in man.

CHAPTER II.—RELIGIOUS REFORM.

FRANCIS regarded the supernatural part of man as predominant; hence he placed religion at the basis of his reform.

It was through religion that he himself became a reformer: from the world to God, and from God to reform. His mystic soul had seen, as in a vision, the little troop of Christ's followers and the Christian Church of the first centuries, with peace, love, and happiness reigning among all the members. It was the same religion which men professed in Francis's time: they had the same head, the same doctrines, the same practices; but the absence of peace, love, and happiness in the Christianity of the thirteenth century, brought it into sad contrast with the original Church. Francis had these two pictures always present before him: the original and genuine Christian, the degenerate Christian of his time; and all his efforts had for their object the restoration of the spirit and life of the first Christians. He believed that the only way to accomplish this reform was to bring all men into

the Church, and enable them to remain true to its teaching.

The conversion of souls and their return to pure Christian life was Francis's work, and the means adopted were largely religious. The Third Order was before all a religious order, and a school of the Christian spirit and Christian virtue. The other two orders aimed essentially at Christian perfection. Prayer and supernatural merit were to avail more in the work of reform than human activity. He was accustomed to say "that his poor, humble, and simple brothers, though they did not know it, converted more men by their prayers and their tears than those who expected to excite the admiration of the people by their science and their preaching."[1]

The principles of reform in Francis's mind were drawn from the Gospel, and the teaching of the Church—Christian charity, Christian penance, and with all, the spirit of poverty. Few modern reformers contemplate a complete social reform based on religion, while penance and poverty are scarcely thought of.

The Apostles had reformed the world by the Gospel; under its influence the family was regenerated, labor became a duty and an honorable

[1] Spec. Perf., Cap. 72.

occupation, justice replaced oppression, charity united those who were separated; luxury, cupidity, were disgraced, poverty was honored. The Christian world had prospered as long as it had adhered to these principles, and it had degenerated in proportion as it had fallen away from them. The conclusion was evident in Francis's mind: if he could but bring the Gospel home to the people, the Christian world would be saved again.

The Gospel recommends peace, charity, penance, self-sacrifice. Not a few of our modern reformers begin their work by setting at war rich and poor, capitalists and workingmen, great and small, and they throw before the eyes of a discontented people the picture of a future state in which there will be no privation, no sacrifice. Francis, on the contrary, began by preaching peace: "God give you His peace!" This was his constant salutation to passers-by, as well as the introduction to all his sermons. This peace, to his mind, was the first condition of social reform. Charity must follow in the wake of peace. Our Lord had brought peace on earth to men of good will; but He wished charity to be the characteristic virtue

[1] I Cel., 23. 3 Soc., 26.

of those who embraced the Christian ideal: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And the second is like this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets."[1] Francis depended on these two principles for his social reform. He spoke as St. John had spoken: "Love one another, my dear children." The world was to be for him, like for F. Denison Maurice, a great family; not the battle-field of "individual competitors, but a divine family expanding itself into a divine nation."[2] The Christian religion teaches the necessity of penance and self-sacrifice; Francis taught these to the world. "I have never consented to receive all that I needed," said Francis, "lest by so doing I might deprive other poor of what is necessary to them."[3] Ordinarily, reform movements will insist on rights and self-assertion, neglecting in a measure, if not totally, reciprocal duties. St. Francis inverted this order by insisting upon

[1] Mat. xxii, 37–40.

[2] "The tracts of Christian Socialism," 1st Tract, 1840.

[3] Spec. Perf., Cap. 12.

duty and having recourse to the Catholic doctrine of penance and sacrifice; inculcating on all, rich and poor, powerful and weak, the necessity and advantages of a generous Christian disinterestedness, he struck at the heart of the difficulty.

He advocated the literal application of the Gospel principles in his own life and in that of his brethren. As a matter of perfection, he wished to imitate the Gospel as perfectly as possible: the "vende omnia . . .," "nihil tuleritis in via . . .," "nolite solliciti esse in crastina die . . .," of the Gospel were for him rules of conduct, which he most scrupulously observed and wished to be observed by his brethren. Christian perfection was made concrete for him in the great models—Christ and the Apostles. He also wished to be an example to the world, and he knew that this example would be efficacious in proportion to the resemblance which he and his companions would bear to the great models of Christianity. The spirit of the Middle Ages admitted of no compromise, particularly in the matter of religion; hence, Francis merely accommodated himself to his time in imitating as literally as possible the life of Christ and His Apostles.

But, it must be added, that as regards universal application, Francis did not advocate the same literal understanding of the Gospel. In fact, he was poorly acquainted with the letter of the Gospel, and, as has been remarked by Mr. Paul Sabatier, his quotations from the Bible, though abundant, represent rather the spirit than the text.[1]

That Francis did not interpret the text too literally, we see from the following incident:—

A doctor of the order of the Friars Preachers came to him to ask him how he should interpret this text from Ezechiel: "If thou declare not to the wicked, that he may be converted from his wicked way, and live, I will require his blood at thy hands."[2] "For," he added, "good Father, I know many who live in the state of mortal sin, whom I do not warn of their sin; will the souls of these men be required at my hands?" Francis, having protested that he was ignorant and needed rather to be taught than to teach the interpretation of Scriptures, was begged again to speak his mind on the difficulty. Finally he said: "If these words are to be understood universally, I would interpret them in this sense,

[1] P. Sabatier's "Spec. Perf.," p. xxix, note 1.
[2] Ezech. iii, 18.

that the servant of God must be so ardent in God's service and so resplendent with holiness that all sinners may find in his very life and example a reproof of their sins. In this way the splendor of his life and the odor of his sanctity will be a continual warning to all sinners." The Dominican left, filled with admiration. "Our theology," he said, "creeps on the earth; the theology of this man, resting on purity and contemplation, is a flying eagle."[1]

There was indeed a whole treatise of Christian social theology in these few words, and Francis's practice was not short of his theory. Christ had been a model to all men, and by the splendor of His holiness had been a reproof and a lesson to sinners. Francis wished to be an example to his brethren, and he wished them to be examples to the world.

The sight of these men, some coming from the highest classes of society, sacrificing everything and living in absolute poverty, could not fail to make a strong impression on the religious people of Francis's time. The peace to which the Apostles exhorted, they themselves maintained in their lives. "As your mouth announces peace," said Francis, "so let this peace be in

[1] II Cel., III, 46. Bon., 153. Spec. Perf., Cap. 53.

your heart, and in greater abundance. Let no one be provoked to anger or scandalized by you; but let all, by your meekness, be incited to peace, kindness, and concord."[1] They loved one another sincerely, were happy in one another's company.[2] The penance which they preached they first practised themselves. "The Lord has granted me first to do penance," says St. Francis in his Testament; the first name of the followers of St. Francis was "the Penitents from Assisi."[3] They did more than they required from others. They observed the Gospel counsels, while from other men they demanded simply the observance of the precepts. From the rich they demanded charity, self-sacrifice, and condescension; but they themselves had first of all given the best proof of their charity, self-sacrifice, and condescension in distributing their goods to the poor, and embracing voluntary poverty. From the poor they demanded patience, respect for superiors, and a just appreciation of the conditions in which Providence had placed them; but they themselves gave the best example not only of patience under the privations of poverty, but of heavenly

[1] I Cel., 23. 3 Soc., 58.
[2] 3 Soc., 45.
[3] 3 Soc., 37.

joy in the possession of a virtue which they loved more truly than all the treasures of the world.

To make this spirit of sacrifice, penance, and patience more acceptable and even dear to the people, Francis gave it a concrete form and presented it to them, as it were, summed up in a beautiful Christian ideal, the object of all his love and all his attention—Lady Poverty. What seems to our modern mind an anomaly, was then a flash of genius.[1] Francis aimed at making all men poor. He wished all men to be poor in spirit; not only poor, but happy. "Blessed are the poor in spirit . . ." The spirit of the poverty which he demanded from them, and to a great extent obtained, was Christian,—on the part of the really poor, a sincere love of their condition which rendered them more like their divine Master; on the part of the rich, the detachment from their goods and a tender care of those whom God's providence had placed on a lower level in the social scale, but who were their equals and often their superiors before God. "It will

[1] However, the Franciscan idea of poverty was attacked in the thirteenth century, v. g. by William of St. Amour, whom Bonaventure answered by his "Apology of the poor."

remain one of the greatest glories of St. Francis, the 'Poverello' of Assisi, to have given to the world the true Christian notion of poverty, so long forgotten,—a poverty which is not an abstinence, a renouncement, but a victory, a treasure. . . ."[1] Not only is it easier to ascend to heaven from a hut than from a palace, as Francis used to say, but the poor in spirit give up the possession of things external and temporal only to enter into possession of better and higher goods: freedom of mind, universal brotherhood, possession and enjoyment, internal and mystical, of all creatures of the universe. The rich man, bent only on material gains and material fortune, possesses and enjoys only a few lands and a limited amount of money, and this possession and enjoyment are continually marred by fear of loss and by difficulties of all kinds: on the contrary, he who is poor in spirit has snatched his heart from such petty loves, and now possesses God and enjoys His divine company; he possesses all the universe, and shares in the common concert which rises from earth to heaven: "Blessed are the poor . . ."

[1] P. Sabatier in the "Conferenze Dantesche," Vol. II, "St. François et le mouvement religieux au treizième siècle," p. 143.

Such was the conception of poverty in Francis's mind; it was the Christian view of poverty, though perhaps carried to an idealism which does not strike our age so forcibly as it did the age of Francis, but which was then in perfect accord with the better thoughts, spirit, and aspirations of men.

This idealization of poverty gives us the clue to what might appear at first a difficulty in Francis's plan of reform, and might at the same time indicate a lack of soundness in his social principles. We allude to the mendicancy among the Franciscans, who were one of the first mendicant orders. A social reform which encourages and prompts mendicity must necessarily defeat its object. In the beginning it was only an extreme measure among the Friars Minor, as the rule of 1221 shows: "It is forbidden to the brothers to receive through themselves or through others, to seek through themselves or through others, any money. The brothers, however, in the case of the manifest necessity of the lepers may seek alms for them."[1] Later, it is true, it became more frequent, and the rule of

[1] Reg. 1a, Cap. vii, viii, ix. Cf. also P. Sabatier: Spec. Perf., p. 64, note 1. Müller: "Die Anfänge des Minoritenordens," p. 35.

1223 simply says that the brothers "must go for alms with confidence."[1] Yet it was rather as a means of practising the spirit of poverty than as a general rule, and the brethren were never allowed to receive any money, nor anything that was not strictly necessary for their support. In his Testament, Francis authorized mendicancy only in case of necessity: "When we do not receive the price of our work, let us have recourse to the table of the Lord, and openly beg for alms."[2]

Besides, this example of mendicity, which in our time would probably work more harm than good, could be and was, in Francis's time, a means of reform. In the eyes of this young population of the thirteenth century, virtues and lessons appeared at their best when realized in some concrete image; and Francis wished his brethren to realize in themselves the concrete image of poverty, and they went around begging because begging was recognized as one of the characteristics of the poor.

"Very dear brethren and my little children," Francis said to his followers, "do not be ashamed to go begging, for the Lord has made Himself

[1] Reg. 2a, Cap. vi. Müller: op. cit., p. 78 ff.
[2] Testamentum.

poor for our sake in this world, and it is after His example that we have chosen the true poverty."[1] Moreover, Francis and his companions not only worked at manual labor, and through their labor were to support themselves and the members of the community unable to work; they also preached the word of God, and if the Gospel says that the spiritual laborer is worthy of his hire, they were perfectly justified when they begged and received material bread in exchange for the spiritual bread which they gave to the people.

Judged by the standard of the Gospel, and the light of the time, there is nothing to reprove in this conduct of Francis and of the first Franciscans. What confirms this view is that Francis never advised or encouraged begging outside of his order; though subordinating labor to prayer and corporal care to spiritual, he ever exhorted all to labor diligently. Mendicancy was only an instrument towards a spiritual good; it fostered humility and it excited in all hearts a greater admiration and a greater love for St. Francis's favorite virtue, personified by his Lady Poverty. If we judge him according to the standard by which he was guided

[1] II Cel., III, 20. Spec. Perf., Cap. 18, 22.

—the Gospel and the supernatural—his attitude on mendicancy will not appear strange. "But the sensual man perceiveth not the things that are of the spirit of God: for it is foolishness to him, and he cannot understand: . . . But the spiritual man judgeth all things: . . . for who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."[1] Francis lived, believed, loved and taught from God's point of view as he understood it. If we wish to judge him fairly we must keep this in mind.

Francis's reform was primarily religious, and he looked at poverty and mendicity from a strictly religious point of view. Yet his love for Christian poverty carried him to extremes which neither sound principles of political economy and social reform, nor sound religious principles would approve. He loved beggars, whoever they were, wherever they came from, whatever might have been the cause of their state. He gave to all without distinction, shared with them all that he had,—his cloak being often the object of his generosity,—and always without discrimination. Once a companion passed an uncharitable remark on a beggar whom

[1] I Cor. ii, 14-16.

he had met: "Brother," he said to Francis, "it is true that this man looks poor enough, but perhaps there is not one in the whole province richer in spirit." Francis was shocked by such a remark and immediately ordered the guilty brother to take off his tunic and prostrate himself naked before the poor man, asking for his pardon and his prayers. "And," he added by way of lesson, "do you know the gravity of your sin against this poor man, against Christ Himself? When you see a poor man you must consider in him Christ Himself, whom he represents, Christ who has assumed our poverty and our infirmity; for the infirmity and poverty of this man are for us a mirror through which we must see and consider with piety the infirmity and poverty of Our Lord Jesus Christ."[1]

In this we recognize the mystic Francis, to whom every being in this world represented something higher and greater. He saw God in all creatures, but he more particularly saw Christ in the poor, and an offense against a poor man became for him an offense against the person of Christ: hence the danger of exaggeration. It is an ideal view of poverty which may strike an idealist's nature; but, when carried too far and

[1] II Cel., III, 29. Spec. Perf., Cap. 37.

acted upon without discrimination, it is a poor means of social reform. To bestow alms on the poor indiscriminately and independently of the circumstances of the case, merely because they are taken to represent Christ in poverty, is scarcely wise from any standpoint of constructive reform.

It is true, Francis's primary object being religious reform, he considered almsgiving as an act of religion rather than a means of social reform. It is true also, that at the time in which Francis lived, men had ideals of almsgiving altogether different from those which we have to-day: they gave indiscriminately and to all, for the sole merit of giving.[1] Yet we cannot help thinking that such indiscriminate almsgiving must have often encouraged idleness, and stifled the impulse to industry which should have been cultivated.

[1] Georg. Ratzinger: "Geschichte der kirchlichen Armenpflege," 2nd ed. Freiburg-im-Breisgau, 1884.

CHAPTER III.—CONSERVATIVE REFORM.

THE reformation of society does not necessarily imply a change of social principles and institutions, since these are not always the cause of social evils. Yet, as a matter of fact, reformers seldom stop short of the institutions and principles: they appeal from monarchy to democracy, and from individualism to socialism. The social reformers of the end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth century acted in the same way. Arnauld di Brescia had attacked the right of temporal possession of wealth by the Church, not simply as a fact, but as a principle; the followers of Pierre Waldo denied several essential doctrines of the Church, and the Albigenses opposed the whole actual social order,—the Church, property, marriage, etc.—as intrinsically bad.

The reform spirit of Francis was very different. Most conservative in his principles, censuring none of the existing institutions, whether in

the religious, political, or economic domain, his reform was essentially a reform of society through individual virtue.

We have already seen that Francis never attacked the Church, her dogmas, nor her hierarchy, as most of the reformers of his time had done. He loved the Church as his Mother,[1] and thought there was no salvation outside of it;[2] he had the greatest respect for the Lord Pope;[3] for the Cardinal Protector of the order,[4] for the priests, even those who did not live a very exemplary life, because he saw in them the dignity more than the man.[5]

As to the dogmas and principles of the Church, he neither attacked them, nor attempted to identify them with his movement in any way. Not that he did not love the Catholic truths which he had heard from his mother, or at the school of Santo Giorgio; these were all included in his love for religion, for the Church, or rather for Christ, for the saints, for the Pope, for the priests and for every thing which came from the

[1] Spec. Perf., Cap. 78.
[2] I Cel., 62.
[3] I Cel., 32. 3 Soc., 46. Bon., 34.
[4] Testam.
[5] I Cel., 46, 62, 75. 3 Soc.,57, 59. Spec. Perf., Cap. 54. Reg. 1a, Cap. xix.

mouth of Christ or His representatives. But he had a distrust for theology as a science.

During the first years of his reform work it was even more than distrust; it was antipathy.[1] Learning, to his mind, was little suited to simple and poor men, such as he wished the Friars Minor to be. Their only science was to be the contemplation of the love of God, the science of the mystic.[2] It was not by theological science that the Friars Minor would convert the world, but by humility, simplicity and prayer.[3] In fact he thought that science would constitute an obstacle to the reform which he contemplated. Science, as Francis experienced it in his time, often led to the denial of the doctrines of the Church: "Those who are puffed up by the wind of science," he said, "distort the truth, say that the truth is error, and, as blind men, deceive those who walk in the truth. But on the day of judgment, the error and falsity of their opinions, which they will have preached as truths, and by which they

[1] Cf. P. Sabatier: "Vie de St. François," Chap. xvi, "Les Frères Mineurs et la science." H. Thode: "Franz von Assisi," pp. 378–385, "Die wissenschaftlichen Bestrebungen der Franciscaner." L. Le Monnier: Vol. II, pp. 60–66, 75–85.

[2] Spec. Perf., Cap. 4.

[3] Bon., 103. Spec. Perf., Cap. 72.

will have thrown many souls into the abyss of blindness, will end in suffering, confusion, and shame, and they and their tenebrous opinions will be drowned in exterior darkness."[1] He predicted that the "Scientia inflativa" would soon be the occasion of ruin to the order.[2]

On his return from the Orient, if we may credit the statement of some of his later historians, he simply closed the school of theology which Giovanni di Strachia, provincial of Bologna, had opened without permission, and at the next general chapter publicly cursed this man who had dared reopen it in spite of his formal prohibition.[3]

Later on he abated somewhat this dislike for science. However, he never favored it much; he wrote in his definitive rule: "Let those who do not know letters not try to learn them."[4] He always preferred the simple and the ignorant to the learned, with the exception that he loved poets and poetry ardently. He did at last admit into the order men who had made science and preaching their profession, like Nicolo Pepoli, who had taught at Bologna, and two of his students,

[1] Spec. Perf., Cap. 72.
[2] Spec. Perf., Cap. 69.
[3] P. Sabatier's Spec. Perf., p. 16, n. 1.
[4] Reg. 2a, Cap. x.

as also St. Anthony of Padua and Alexander of Hales. This was followed by a movement in favor of science, a movement which developed so rapidly that the Franciscans soon became the rivals of the Dominicans in all branches of learning.

While Francis continued to protest against the "Scientia inflativa," he permitted his followers to study, provided they remained faithful in prayer and simplicity; yet he understood science, even then, not so much as an end, as a means of perfection, and his distrust was still strong. "I am willing," he said, "that some of the brothers should study Holy Scripture, provided according to the example of Christ, who is said to have prayed rather than to have read, they do not omit the duty of prayer. Let them learn, not only that they may know how to speak, but that they may practice what they learn and propose it to the imitation of others."[1]

This dislike of science is easily understood if we believe with Newman that "Poetry is the antagonist of Science." Science analyzes, synthetizes, reasons, draws conclusions from firmly established premises, shows the relations of means to end, distinguishes principles and their applica-

[1] Bon., 152.

tions, while the processes in the mind of St. Francis were anything but these. He was a stranger to the processes of logic and discursive calculation. He was impulsive and emotional as children are. He was a poet.

With such views on theology, there could be no danger of an attack on the dogmas and principles of the Church. The conservatism of St. Francis in this regard was absolute.

In the political order as well, Francis was conservative. He attacked neither institutions nor principles. When the Emperor Otto was on his way to Rome to receive the imperial crown, Francis refused to go to see him, and only allowed one of his brethren to meet him and announce that his reign would be of short duration;[1] this was not contempt of political power, but rather the desire to show that happiness is not to be placed in this power any more than in riches. His letters to political rulers, in which he calls them his masters,[2] his allusions to the dignity of those who wield public power,[3] his conduct toward them,[4] show that he was in per-

[1] I Cel., 43.
[2] "Opusc. Sti. P. Franc. As.," Ep. iv, Quaracchi ed.
[3] Act. Sanct., Ap. 23, de B. Ægidio, Cap. I, II.
[4] Bon., 135.

fect sympathy with the institutions of the existing order.

It is true that the movement inaugurated by the Third Order hastened, particularly in Italy, the disintegration of the greatest political institution of the Middle Ages—the feudal system. But Francis never dreamed of destroying this system; he saw in it abuses, lack of justice between lords and serfs, lack of proportion between the services rendered by the two respective parties; he saw the serfs too often oppressed by their masters: those abuses he tried to reform. Perhaps the more experienced hand which put the finishing touch to the constitution of the Third Order foresaw, or even calculated in advance, the events which were to follow the reform inaugurated by our Saint, and which were finally to lead the feudal system to destruction; but that was certainly not in Francis's mind. When he heard a serf curse his master who had robbed him of his goods, Francis tried to appease him, gave him his cloak and made him promise not to curse his master any more.[1]

A more radical reformer would have not only sympathized with the poor serf, but blamed with him both the master and the institution which

[1] II Cel., III, 33. Spec. Perf., Cap. 32.

caused such abuses. Francis believed that individuals, and not institutions, caused all social wrongs. In fact, by the reconciliation which he brought about between the "majores" and the "minores" of Assisi, by the charter which he then inspired, he approved and accepted the divisions of men into serfs and lords, and consequently, the feudal system as an institution, as well as the principles on which it rested.

Francis believed that the inequality of classes is necessary in any social order. "The rich are our brothers," he said once, "for we have all been created by the same Creator. They are our lords, because they help us in doing penance by supplying to us what is necessary for the body."[1]

Other reformers both before, and in, St. Francis's time, had seen no other remedy for the abuses of wealth than revolt against the rich, and the extinction of class. Francis not only recognized the distinction of social classes, but confirmed it. In his Third Order, members of all classes were received without losing the privileges of their position; kings and serfs belonged to it, but the kings remained kings and the serfs remained serfs.

In Francis's mind, not only did the poor and the

[1] 3 Soc., 58.

subordinate have claims on the charity of the rich and the superiors, but also the useless members of society had a right to support and care. They were men, they were the creatures of God, and this was enough for him. There was in the Middle Ages no being more useless than the leper, none lower in the social scale, yet none received from Francis and his companions more tender care. Through them this class of people, so numerous in their time, was brought to the enjoyment of social rights and services from which they had been more or less excluded before.

Francis was also most conservative in the economic principles which he unconsciously held. Labor, in his conception, was an obligation, at least in that order which was to serve as an example to the whole world. The time of the brothers was divided between prayer and labor.[1] The brothers of the first order helped the peasants in their fields.[2] "I wish all my brothers to work," Francis said, "that we may be less burdensome to others and that our heart and our tongue may not be exposed to the danger of idleness, and those who do not know

[1] Spec. Perf., Cap. 10. Reg. 1a, Cap. vii.
[2] Spec. Perf., Cap. 55.

how to work must learn."[1] "If any man will not work, neither let him eat," he said in his first rule.[2] To a brother who ate well, drank well, and slept well, but prayed little and worked less, he said: "Go thy way, Brother Fly, thou hast long enough lived like the hornets who make no honey and eat that of the bees," and without more ado he dismissed him from the convent.[3]

He made it a rule that all his brethren should work at a trade; if they knew none, they were obliged to learn one.[4] They worked in order to obtain the things that were necessary for their support.[5]

This obligation to labor for the purpose of supporting the members of the order and avoiding idleness does honor to Francis's judgment. Monks, before his time, had worked, and this work was the source of great benefit to civilization. But the motive which made them work

[1] Spec. Perf., Cap. 75.

[2] Reg. 1a, Cap. vii.

[3] II Cel., III, 21. Spec. Perf., Cap. 24.

[4] Reg. 1a, Cap. vii. Testam. II Thess. iii, 10. Spec. Perf., Cap. 75.

[5] Reg. 2a, Cap. v. Cf. other references on Franciscan labor in P. Sabatier's Spec. Perf., p. 148, and K. Müller's "Die Anfänge des Minoritenordens, pp. 35 ff., 44 ff.

was rather spiritual: to avoid idleness, to do penance. Their work was not necessary to support them, nor was it done with that intention. Francis introduced a new spirit in the labor of religious. As his brethren were to be living models to the people, particularly to the poor laboring classes, he wished them to work like the poor, like the artisans of the cities, like the peasants on the farms; in one word, to earn a livelihood. It was to make a living that Egidio carried water in Brindisi, made baskets in Ancona, sold wood in Rome.[1] Higher motives were not excluded, but a new motive was added which was to be a potent factor in the efficacy of Franciscan preaching and example. In Francis's mind, work was not to have for its object mere profit, nor however, was it to be limited to supernatural ends,—a motive often inaccessible to the common people. It was to be for the satisfying of their present needs: "corporis necessaria."[2]

Francis believed that the laborer, by his work, deserved a reward amply sufficient for himself and for those whom he is bound to support: "Out of the reward of their work, let them (the brethren) receive the things necessary for

[1] Act. Sanct., Ap. 23, de B. Ægidio, n. 5.
[2] Reg. 1a, Cap. vii. Reg. 2a, Cap. v.

themselves and for their brethren."[1] "Out of their reward," says Francis, because the brethren were not to accept more than the necessaries of life for themselves and the community; but Francis supposed that more is owed to the laborer, and that he has a right not only to the necessaries of life, but also to some comfort, in exchange for the work which he does.

Besides manual labor, there is also another labor which deserves its reward: it is the spiritual work, the work which has for its object the good of souls. The members of the first order were to preach,[2] and it was in return for this spiritual labor, as well as to be more like the poor of God, that Francis recommended recourse to begging in case of necessity. The brethren, in receiving alms, only received what was due to them as a reward for their preaching and their work in the spiritual world of God.

Land ownership had been the cause of serious abuses in the Middle Ages; it had become practically the source of all authority and of all civil rights. Heretics had protested in the name of religion and philosophy: all matter, in their way of thinking, came from the evil principle,

[1] Reg. 2a, Cap. v.
[2] Reg. 1a, Cap. xvii. Reg. 2a, Cap. ix.

and was itself evil. It was the old Manichean doctrine, which furnished them a means of attack against the possession of riches.

Francis did not condemn land ownership; he accepted and sanctioned it, condemning only the abuses to which it gave rise.

It is true that in the first and second orders no property was allowed in any form; the community, as such, owned nothing. But this was the condition of the perfect, of those who followed not only the commandments, but the counsels, and Francis never dreamt of applying this state of things outside of the select numbers which he had gathered around him. On the contrary, Francis had a keen sense of the right of property. When he wished to destroy the house which had been built in Assisi for the visitors, and the soldiers came to him and told him that this house was not his but belonged to the town of Assisi, he immediately gave up his work of destruction and said: "Therefore, if it is yours, I will not touch it."[1] The same thing occurred in Bologna, and shows that Francis opposed the possession of goods only in the first and second orders.[2]

[1] II Cel., III, 3. Spec. Perf., Cap. 7.
[2] II Cel., III, 4. Bon., 89. Spec. Perf., Cap. 6.

In the Third Order, he recognized the right of private ownership, and confirmed it by accepting landowners and merchants as well as serfs and artisans as members; he never asked them to sell their goods and give the product to the poor. All the Tertiaries were to write their wills, lest they die intestate,[1] which again shows that he recognized not only the right of property, but also the right to transmit property to others by the sole will of the donor. Again, Francis always respected as his masters the lords, who were the land-owners of the time, and he exacted for them from his brethren the same respect.[2]

The same may be said of the use of money, an institution also loudly condemned by some reformers of the time. It was not allowed in the order, and Francis, in his pious exaggeration, made it a crime for his brethren not only to retain, but to touch a coin.[3] But he did not apply this rule to outsiders, and he fully understood the utility of money, since he made the members of the Third Order contribute one denier each month to the general fund of the community.[1]

[1] Reg. Ant. (Sabatier), Cap. x.
[2] 3 Soc., 58.
[3] Spec. Perf., Cap. 14.

All this shows that Francis was far from attacking any of the social principles or institutions existing in his time. A faithful child of the Church, no thought was further from his mind than that of attacking her dogma and practice. Always humble and respectful in his relations with civil authorities, with the lords and the rich, he accepted as a matter of course the received principles of his day concerning the government of the state, the ownership of land, and the labor contracts. It never crossed his mind that some other social order might be preferable to the one then in force. Yet he was not blind to the existing evils: he saw the injustice, the hatred, the strife, which agitated society; but instinctively he attributed these evils to the perversion of the human heart, and it was the individual that he strove to reform.

[1] Reg. Ant. (Sabatier), Cap. vii.

CHAPTER IV.—INDIVIDUAL REFORM.

FRANCIS had a very concrete view of the social question, as of everything else. There was no social evil for him but sin, and sin as affecting the individual; and no social reform but the removing of sin from the individual soul. To bring back men from sin to grace, from vice to virtue, was the object of his own and his followers' efforts. "With marvelous tact," says Mr. Paul Sabatier, "he felt that the work of reform of the Church was a work of interior renovation; it is one of the characteristics that make his attempt absolutely an original effort and differentiate it from the other reform movements of the same epoch."[1]

There was a great deal of philosophy in the unphilosophical Francis. The end of man is happiness, and Francis aimed at happiness: happiness in the other world, happiness even in this world. But the means to this happiness are internal rather than external, and the reform which is to reëstablish order is to be an internal

[1] P. Sabatier's Spec. Perf., p. 93, n. 1.

renovation. In other words, not things, not institutions, not philosophy, but persons, must be reformed in order to effect social reform. These are the ideas which Francis instinctively put into practice. He might have adopted for his motto the German proverb: "Let us be better, and the world will be better"; or he might have said, as Peter Alcantara to a pessimistic Spanish knight: "My dear friend, have God's law observed in your home, by example and authority, and if every one does as much the world will be saved."

In this we have the whole idea of Francis on social reform. While he admitted the distinction of classes in the social order, he saw that the members of one class were abusing their power and authority to oppress the members of a weaker class. The lords were treating the serfs as slaves rather than as brothers, and Francis reminded them of the duty of masters to their servants. The superiors of the order were not to be called abbots nor priors, but ministers, to show that they must be the servants of those who were under their care,[1] and in this way they were to give to the world an example of the true Christian relations which must exist between the higher and lower classes. The lords were

[1] Reg. 1a, Cap. iv.

received into the Third Order on the same conditions as the serfs, and the serfs were their equals in all that concerned the administration and privileges of the order.

Yet Francis was awake to the failings of the lower class, and he endeavored to remove all distrust, envy, and cupidity from their hearts. He showed them the beauty of poverty, which Christ had embraced, and told them that they should be satisfied with the share which Providence had given them. They could not only more easily obtain the kingdom of heaven which Christ had promised to those who bear poverty with the Christian spirit, but they could also, and should, be happy even in this life. Happiness is not dependent on riches, but on peace of conscience and on virtue. True happiness is in hope, in prayer, in power over one's self, in the freedom of the soul.[1] The Franciscans were poor, yet there were none happier than they.[2] Francis enjoyed created things more than any other saint or reformer ever had. Though he was poor, the birds of the air, the fishes of the sea, the insects of the field were all his, and they

[1] Cf. Chap. on Perfect Joy in Acta B. Franc., Cap. 7, and Fioretti, Cap. 8. Spec. Perf., Cap. 96. Cf. also P. Sabatier's Spec. Perf., p. lxii, and p. 190, n. 1.

[2] I Cel., 38, 39.

were for him a continual source of enjoyment and happiness. He wished men to understand that this happiness is within the reach of all individuals; it was not a future happiness, to be realized by a revolution or by the slow evolution of mankind, but immediate and actual for each man.[1]

Though happiness was in poverty more truly than in riches and power, though it was the duty of the members of the lower class to avoid hatred, envy, cupidity, yet no class was to be deprived of its natural rights. The serfs were perfectly justified in resisting the unjust demands and encroachments of their lords, and should even use the strength of association to bring to terms those who wished to oppress them. The duties of the Third Order, including the prohibition for the brethren to carry arms and to take solemn oaths, the obligation to contribute to a common fund which was used to assist the oppressed serfs, aimed at reclaiming rights which had been taken away from them.

[1] Hence the following statement of Ruskin ("Mornings in Florence") is not entirely correct: "The Gospel of works, according to Francis lay in three things: you must work without money and be poor; you must work without pleasure and be chaste; you must work according to orders and be obedient."

At the same time that this association brought strength to the people, it inculcated on them the duty of solidarity in a manner stronger than ever before. The guilds had brought together men of the same trade, but between the different corporations bitter rivalries often existed. The Third Order united all men; not only the members of the municipality, but also cities and provinces and even nations were leagued together, so that the Third Order was really an international association which showed to all men their duty to unite in the cause of good, in opposition to the selfishness and the cruelty of the favored few.

Again, though Francis never attacked riches in themselves as something intrinsically evil, he understood that they were a source of much trouble and misery. "For, from possession arise difficulties and disputes, which put all kinds of obstacles to the love of God and of our neighbor."[1] While many looked upon riches as the greatest good and as a sign of prosperity, Francis saw in them, or rather in their abuse, the curse of the time; for, though they were God's creatures, and good in themselves, they had been diverted from their proper object and made an obstacle

[1] 3 Soc., 35. Bern. Bess., Cap. IV.

instead of a means in the relations between God and man—a condition against which Francis protested with all his might.

Poverty was not to be eradicated from this world, but on the contrary to be made the principle of true happiness. Other reformers had contempt for poverty, and made the poor more miserable by emphasizing their misfortunes and shame. Francis made them love their poverty. He looked upon it as a state which would always exist in the world for the good of the world. Our Lord had consecrated it, and it was to remain till the end of time; not, however, to be an object of shame and horror to men, but an object of love. Nor should all men necessarily be poor in reality: the spirit of poverty was the essential thing.

Money particularly had been abused. The more and more frequent commutation of feudal services into money payments especially at the time of the Crusades; the wonderful development of Italian commerce at the same epoch, coupled with the scarcity of gold and silver caused by the construction of numerous and magnificent churches and the manufacture of rich sacred vessels, had brought about a feverish eagerness for the possession of money. All

were bent on making money, and to obtain it fair and foul means were used alike. This abuse had attracted the most violent protests from the reformers, and Francis was not the last in raising his voice against the evil. Always ready to do more than he required from others, he renounced all use of money, in order that others might learn from him as well as from his brothers how to practise a just moderation, and to avoid setting their hearts on an object which was not worthy of them.[1]

The life of the brethren was also to be for all an example of self-sacrifice and renunciation. These virtues men had too often forgotten; each man lived for himself, and was unwilling to suffer anything whatever for the sake of his fellow men. When each member insists on having all his rights and limits himself to defined duties, there can be little hope of peace and concord. Hence Francis wished each one to act more generously. The Franciscans gave all their goods to the poor before joining the order; it was not too much then to ask of the rich of the world to make little sacrifices in favor of the poor, nor was it too much to ask the poor to bear with patience the sacrifices which Providence imposed upon them.

[1] II Cel., III, 11. Spec. Perf., Cap. 14.

Coöperation should be the law governing the relations of classes and persons. Mankind is the world of God, showing beauty and harmony in all relations; men are all fellow workers, not rivals, in this world, and all must coöperate towards the same end,—the happiness of all. The rich must help the poor in exchange for the services and respect which the latter pay them; the poor must respect the rich and render them gladly the services to which they are bound by their condition. The Third Order tended precisely to reëstablish this coöperation and good feeling between all men and all classes.

The rich should avoid those excesses, lordly manners, luxurious life, which, perhaps more than the differences of fortune and condition, vexed and embittered the poor and the lowly. The contrast itself caused suffering and bad feeling. It was this abuse that Francis wished to remedy when he made it a rule that the members of the Third Order should avoid all vain ornaments in their way of dressing, dishonest festivals, theaters, dances, etc.[1] The poor feel their poverty much less when they see the rich dress simply, eat plain food, and rest satisfied with the innocent pleasures of home.

Francis had another object in view when he

[1] Reg. Ant. (Sabatier), Cap. i.

endeavored to check excesses among the rich and to restrain the cupidity of the poor. It is not the abundance of goods which produces happiness; the rich with all their fortune have perhaps more unsatisfied desires than the poor themselves, and it is probable that happiness is in inverse ratio with wants. Hence, Francis's object was to decrease the wants in order to increase happiness. The brothers were happier than other men, because they had fewer wants and desires than others. "Lovers of the most holy poverty," says Tommaso di Celano, "possessing nothing, they were attached to nothing, and feared the loss of nothing. Distracted by no care, without any trouble or anxiety, they expected the morrow without fear."[1] If the rich were less attached to their fortune, they would fear less the loss of it; if they had not created for themselves a thousand wants, they would not suffer from the impossibility of satisfying them. The poor are protected against such a danger by the very nature of their condition, and they should be careful not to increase uselessly wants which make man a slave.

It is for the same reason, though in a different

[1] I Cel., 39.

order of things, that Francis always opposed the asking of privileges from the Sovereign Pontiff, though these could have been easily obtained; they were in fact often offered to the Friars Minor, and sometimes imposed on them in spite of themselves. He knew that such privileges would increase the desires and ambition of the brothers by increasing advantages and authority: instead of being useful to the order, they could only be a cause of trouble.[1]

There was another lesson which Francis never ceased to inculcate by word and example, to preach, to teach in private and in public, among his brethren and among all men—the beauty of charity at the same time as its necessity. "Never," says Mr. Paul Sabatier, "never did any man contemplate a more complete social renovation, but if the aim is the same as for many revolutionists who came after him, the means are altogether different;—his only weapon was love." This was, as it were, the summary of his means of reform. He had found men at war: there were wars between nations, wars between provinces, wars between towns, between families, between

[1] Testam. Spec. Perf., Cap. 50. Cf. also P. Sabatier: "Tract de Indulg." p. xix, n. 1. and p. xxxv, and F. Lempp: "Frère Elie," p. 58.

individuals, and to restore peace, Francis recommended to all, charity. Men were brothers, not enemies, and they should love, not hate each other. Francis had found the different classes of society in continual opposition: superiors oppressing inferiors, serfs revolted against their lords, subjects against their masters; he taught the lower classes how to love those who represented God's authority on earth. Justice will do much towards restoring social order, but it will stop short of peace unless charity,—above all Christian charity, the charity of men considering themselves as brothers in Christ,—confirm and complete the peaceful relations which must exist between classes and between individuals. In other words, classes and individuals cannot be brought together in permanent concord by duty alone, but by duty and sympathy.

Hence, the members of the Third Order were requested not only to restore stolen goods, but to avoid everything that might check the charity and sympathy which should exist between the members and between all men; they were to appeal to judges only in case of necessity, to avoid lawsuits and oaths, to write their wills, in order to prevent dissensions, to have recourse

to friendly reconciliations. It was the duty of the visitor to visit the communities in order to settle immediately the little quarrels which might have become serious if they had not been smothered at their inception.[1]

Besides, justice can exist only between men bound together by rights and duties: charity extends to all men and to all things. Not only could the lords and serfs, rich and poor, clergy and laity, contribute in their respective positions to social peace, but there was not one man on earth who could not, by his example, his efforts, his kindness, contribute towards universal peace. "Love one another, as I have loved you,"[2] was the commandment of Christ to His disciples, and it was the advice of Francis and his Friars Minor to all men: "Love one another. If you love one another there can be no social oppression, no social conflict. Love one another and the world will be reformed. It will become again the world of God, in which charity reigns, and with charity, harmony and order."

Such was reform in Francis's mind: the reform of society by the individual; the reform of the individual by the observance of the rules

[1] Reg. Ant. (Sabatier), Cap. vi, viii, x, xiii.
[2] Joan. xv, 12.

of the Third Order, which were simply the Christian principles applied to the circumstances of the time. The rich sympathizing with the poor, charitable towards them; the poor assisted by the rich, and resigned to their condition, or rather, happy in their poverty; masters just and humane; workmen conscientious and satisfied; the authorities, the officials, respecting the rights of God, Church, and conscience; inferiors respecting legitimate authority: these were the means which were to bring peace among individuals, families, social classes, nations, Church and state, and to make the world the ideal Christian society, everything coöperating in the eternal and temporal welfare of men.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION.

1. Later History of the Movement.
2. Lessons for Our Day.

1. THE popular movement and the social reform begun by Francis reached their climax in his own days. Yet they did not die with him: the impulse was given, and St. Francis had worthy successors in those disciples who, formed by him and faithful to his high ideal of poverty, remained the friends of the poor and helpless and the reformers of God's Church. Among these it will suffice to mention St. Clare, who twice saved her native town from the attacks of usurpers; St. Anthony of Padua, who bravely intervened in the dissensions between Guelphs and Ghibellines, protected the people against the tyranny of Ezzelino at Verona, restored peace at Padua, and protested loudly against the progress of usury; the young St. Rose of Viterbo, who denounced publicly and with so much effect the Emperor Frederick II; St. Margaret of Cortona, who saved from oppression the town where

she had found a refuge for her virtue. Above all, Francis continued to live in his Third Order, which, assisted by the Popes, resisted the encroachments of princes and lords and won for the people liberty and independence.

But meanwhile, the influence of the first order had been paralyzed more or less by internal divisions, not to speak of intrigues at Rome and conflicts with other orders and with the secular clergy, which noticeably diminished its power over the people.

With the fifteenth century opens a new phase of the Franciscan movement, always inspired by the ideas and the sweet figure of Francis still living in the memory and love of his children. St. Bernardino of Siena, Albert of Sardiano, Bernarbe of Terni, St. James of the Marches, St. John of Capistran, all Franciscans according to the mind of their Father, made a brave fight in favor of the poor against Jewish bankers and usurers. Blessed Bernardino of Feltre completed in Italy the organization of the "Monti di Pietá," which from Italy spread over the whole Christian world, for the good of the little, the weak, and all the friends of Francis.

But this was as the last spark of life in the popular movement created by Francis. In the

sixteenth century, new relaxation, new divisions in the order, the gradual transformation of the Third Order into a purely religious order, then also the progress of the Renaissance and the rise of the Reformation, mark the end of the Franciscan reform movement.

Since then, and particularly at the end of the nineteenth century, efforts have been made to restore to the Third Order its social influence. Leo XIII, in his encyclicals "Auspicato," "Humanum genus," "Quod auctoritate," in his letters and in his discourses, again and again recommended this Third Order to the Church as a solution of the social question, and with this object in view revised its rule by his constitution "Misericors Dei Filius." Franciscan congresses have met and passed resolutions aiming at the restoration of the Third Order as a reform movement. Some good has been accomplished, but much remains to be done before practical results are obtained which can compare with the effects of Francis's reform in the thirteenth century.

2. The lesson which Francis has left us should not be lost. The success as well as the shortcomings of the movement must serve to

guide us in the solution of the present social problem.

It is true, circumstances have changed: our social problem is not the social problem of the thirteenth century, and the solution must change with the problem. Yet it is true also that there are many features in common in the two problems; and if it is so, the solution given by Francis must contain many elements which, adapted to present circumstances, would be available for the solution of the actual social question.

To-day, as well as in Francis's time, there is a sharp division between social classes, between the poor and the rich, the powerful and the weak. In the thirteenth century it was land and land ownership which conferred authority and power; to-day it is capital and wealth. The names have changed: the lords have been replaced by the capitalists, the serfs by the workingmen, but the oppression and the opposition are the same. To-day, as well as in the thirteenth century, there is a social unrest, an aspiration towards a better state; the working people are making their way toward liberty and independence; the progress of trade-unions and of Socialism are evident proofs of this movement. At the same time there is corruption, there is vice, in all

classes of the social order in our own days as well as there was in the thirteenth century.

Francis had to battle largely against the same elements as our modern reformers have to combat, and the victory which he won, though not complete, has merited for him an honorable place in the history of social reform.

His methods and the process by which his views were formed were very different from those of our modern reformers. But the very contrast contains more than one interesting lesson.

By temperament Francis belonged to the class that we call imaginative. In him imagination was a dominant faculty, and his actions were the result of impulse and feeling rather than of deliberation. His imagination, centered on the contemplation of the truths and mysteries of spiritual life, produced in him the idealism and optimism which artists and poets have admired and loved so much. He was himself both artist and poet. Some modern reformers attempt to base their theories of reform on rigid scientific principles; but St. Francis distrusted science, since he believed it led to pride and to perdition. Yet we may not for a moment think that the unreasoning Francis was unreasonable, for he had

remarkable intuitions, which gave him rare insight where reason might fail to give ordinary understanding.

It is the custom nowadays to regard our evil as primarily social, hence disassociated from the spiritual view of society. Attempts are made to discover the processes from which our problems result; we study environment, heredity, institutions, sanitation, wages,—as these may all be factors in our social situation. Appeal is made to the public, to government, to law; parties are formed, platforms are adopted, and similar manifestations of merely social activity are witnessed.

St. Francis, on the contrary, judged things from the spiritual or religious point of view. He believed in the Church, he saw society through the Church, hence he never escaped from the view which religion suggested. He saw God in everything, he saw all things in their supernatural relations. He loved poverty because Our Lord had loved it; he hated sin because sin is the enemy of God. For him the reform of the world meant simply the reform of the sinner. He saw the souls of men, created by God, and destined to honor and bless him. Evil was embodied in the devil, who tempted men to all sorts of crimes.

The war between the angel of light and the angel of darkness was continual. Money, wealth, honors, power, were the instruments used by the latter for the perversion of men; poverty and virtue were the remedies which God had established to reform and save the world.

While our modern reformers plan and organize on set lines, St. Francis showed no more method in his administration than in his thinking. From want of prudence, and perhaps from overabundant faith in divine intervention, his activity, amazing in itself, was often misapplied. But, in general, aided by the powerful support and guidance of his "beloved Mother" the Church, he succeeded wonderfully in communicating to others his love of what is great and good and holy, and accomplished in a surprisingly short time what many more cautious, but perhaps less earnest, reformers have failed to obtain.

Our social problem is complex: it contains moral, religious, political, as well as economic elements, and any plan of reform which limits itself to any one of these aspects will, by the very fact, remain incomplete. Our reform, like Francis's, must be comprehensive. The present order is based largely on an economic basis. Francis,

and after him Catholics, as also Christian Socialists, say that the basis of a social reform as well as of the social order should be the religious and ethical element.

Another important lesson which Francis teaches us is that, for a reform to be successful, it is not necessary that it should be destructive of the present order, of present principles, of present institutions. The evil may lie largely in the very individuals, and they are the objects on which the reform must first exercise itself. A reform program like that of the Socialists, which proposes the abolition of the private ownership of capital and the complete overturning of our present social order, is too radical to be safely resorted to. The resources of the actual order have not been exhausted. The associations of the laboring class have not obtained their best results yet; they are according to Francis's spirit: he grouped together the workingmen of his day, not only in trade organizations, and in national federations, but into an international society which was patronized by the laboring class throughout Europe, and by many well-meaning members of the employing class and of the aristocracy of the day, as well. The policy of exclusion was unknown to Francis: occupation, for-

tune, sex, age, class, were no barriers to reception into the Third Order, nor was any one forced into it; but the inherent advantages of the association, as well as the popularity of its founder and the protection of the powerful Church, were a sufficient inducement to affiliation.

Nor is this the only lesson that our labor-unions and employers' associations may learn from the work of Francis. The Third Order, being preëminently a religious association, offered by its very nature a common ground on which conflicting social, political, and economic interests could meet. Opposition is, as it were, the very reason of existence, the essence of our modern associations; capitalists and employers group themselves together precisely in opposition to the laborers, and the laborers group together precisely to resist the encroachments of, and in opposition to, the capitalists and employers. Perhaps there is room for a more universal association in which all will meet on a purely ethical or religious basis, and in which the social and economic conflicts will find an easier solution.

A true and solid reform, now as well as in Francis's time, must begin by the reform of the individual. The social problem is caused largely by lack of honesty and loyalty, by cupidity, pas-

sion, personal degradation. The common ownership of capital would not do away with these evils, and they would still cause social troubles if men themselves be not reformed; on the other hand, more virtue, more justice, more fraternity, in the present order, would go far towards solving our problem. The spirit of individualism would not disappear in the socialistic régime, while the awakening of the social conscience in the present order could work wonders. It is true, the perfect reign of honesty and charity in the social order is an ideal which cannot be fully realized in this world; but, for us, as for Francis, it should be a picture continually before our eyes, which would serve for our guidance in our efforts and activity, and even if our results fall short of our ideal, every step forward is a gain and an approach to the solution of the social question.

In summing up we can find no better counsel than that given by Leo XIII in his encyclical "Rerum Novarum." "Let everyone therefore put his hand to the work which falls to his share. . . . Those who rule the state must use the laws and the institutions of the country; masters and rich men must remember their duty; the poor, whose interests are at stake, must make every lawful and proper effort; and since religion alone

. . . can destroy the evil at its root, all men must be persuaded that the primary thing needful is a return to Christianity, in the absence of which all the plans and devices of the wisest will be of little avail." . . .

" . . . Above all let charity be cherished,—charity, the mistress and queen of virtues. For the happy results we all long for must be chiefly brought about by the plenteous outpouring of charity; that true Christian charity which is the fulfilling of the whole Gospel law; that charity which is always ready to sacrifice itself for others' sake, and which is man's surest antidote against worldly pride and immoderate love of self; that charity whose office is described and whose godlike features are drawn by the Apostle St. Paul in these words: Charity is patient, is kind, . . . seeketh not her own, . . . suffereth all things, . . . endureth all things."

APPENDIX

SOURCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY ON ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI.

THE year 1266 marks an all-important date in the history of the sources on St. Francis. Since the time when, during the very life of the founder, a party had arisen in favor of mitigation, continual dissensions had rent the order. Conditions had almost reached a critical stage when St. Bonaventure was elected general in 1257. His policy was one of pacification, and his constant efforts were to bring together the Rigorists and the Mitigants by offering to the two extreme parties a common platform which might serve as a bond of reconciliation. The result of these efforts was the document known as the "Arles Constitutions" and the work which interests us here,—the "New Legend." It was called by this name in opposition to the old legends which had been in circulation among the religious of the order up to this time, but which were all more or less inclined to favor one or the other party, according as they had been written by a partisan of the observance or by one of those

who held for mitigation. Of course, in writing this new legend St. Bonaventure had used all or most of these first documents; but he had carefully left out anything that could be used as an argument by one or the other party. In 1266, three years after the completion of this work, the General Franciscan Chapter, assembled in Paris, decreed "in the name of obedience that all the legends of the Blessed Francis, written formerly, should be destroyed, and that even outside of the order the brothers should endeavor to do away with those they may find." From this day the New Legend alone was to be used in the Franciscan order, and even as far as it could be done, outside the order. This was equivalent to sacrificing the original lives of St. Francis for a mere compilation, but as it was thought then that everything should be sacrificed to the work of pacification in the order, the decree went into execution.

From 1266 to 1769, a period of over five centuries, the original sources of St. Francis's history remained buried in oblivion. The great work of the Bollandists gave rise to the modern movement which has brought to light so many old and precious documents, and has reconstituted in its true light the life and character of

St. Francis. Yet this work remained incomplete until the end of the last century, when a new and remarkable interest was developed in the study of the saint. The signal for this new Franciscan movement was given largely by the celebration, in 1882, of the seventh centenary of the saint's birth. Since then biographies and studies of all kinds have succeeded each other almost without interruption. At the same time the original sources have been again studied, criticized, corrected, and published; new documents have been brought to light and the old ones have been revised and re-edited according to the best methods of modern criticism. In this work Protestants and Rationalists have contributed as well as Catholics, with a zeal and a love which only the sweet figure of St. Francis could call forth. Germany, through Father Ehrle, S.J., and Father Denifle, O.P., in the "Archiv für Litteratur und Kirchengeschichte des Mittelalters," and in the "Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie,"—France, through Paul Sabatier in the "Collection d'études et de documents sur l'histoire religieuse et littéraire du Moyen Âge" and the "Opuscules de critique historique,"—Italy, through the sons of St. Francis, in the "Analecta Franciscana," and in other publications of the

College of St. Bonaventure, at Quaracchi, near Florence, also in the "Miscellanea Francescana," "Analecta Ordinis Minorum Cappucinorum," etc.,—Belgium, through the editors of the "Analecta Bollandiana,"—England itself, through J. S. Brewer and Richard Howlet in the "Monumenta Franciscana," a work which, however, is prior to the present movement, as it was published in 1858 and 1882,—all these have shared in the work of reconstructing the original sources of the early Franciscan history. Lastly, on the 2nd of June, 1902, the "Società internazionale di Studi Francescani in Assisi" was founded for the purpose of developing and facilitating Franciscan studies. This society owes its rise in a great measure to the efforts of Paul Sabatier and counts among its members a great number of writers on St. Francis, however mostly non-Catholic.[1]

This movement, in all the vigor of its youth, has already produced important results in the line of discovery and criticism; but it promises still greater things for the future. We may well

[1] "Origine e costituzione . . ." Assisi, 1902. In connection with this international society must be mentioned also the international review: "Bullettino critico di cose francescane," the first number of which appeared April, 1905, Firenze, Italy.

hope that before long, all the original documents which were so summarily dealt with by the decree of the General Chapter of 1266 will be reinstated in their rights, and will help the present generation in reconstructing the grand and loving figure of St. Francis, and in placing in its true light his wonderful work of religious and social reform.

Critical studies of the sources have been made by H. Thode,[1] L. Le Monnier,[2] W. Goetz,[3] A. G. Little,[4] P. Sabatier,[5] H. Paschal Robinson, O.F.M.,[6] and many others.

Again, extensive bibliographies of the works written on St. Francis have been already published; among them may be mentioned those of Fr. Marcellino da Civezza, O.F.M.,[7] H. Boehmer,[8]

[1] "Franz von Assisi und die Anfänge der Kunst der Renaissance in Italien," Berlin, 1885. New edition, Berlin, 1904.

[2] "Histoire de St. François," Paris, 1890 (3d edition).

[3] "Die Quellen zur Geschichte des hl. Franz von Assisi. Eine kritische Untersuchung," Gotha, 1904.

[4] "The Sources of the History of St. Francis," Eng. Hist. Rev., 1902, pp. 643–675.

[5] "Vie de St. François d'Assise." "Nouveaux travaux sur les documents Franciscains," Paris, 1903.

[6] "Franciscan Literature," "The Dolphin," in July and August, 1905.

[7] "Saggio di Bibliografia geografica storica etnografica San Francescana," Prato, 1879.

[8] "Analekten zur Geschichte des Franciscus von Assisi," Tübingen, 1904.

and especially of Ulysse Chevalier.[1] Yet a short critical review of the sources and bibliography of the principal works concerning the saint may be justified by the fact that modern criticism, even during the last few years, has thrown considerable light on the knowledge of these sources, and that new and interesting studies from different points of view are almost constantly offered to the public.

[1] "Répertoire des sources historiques du Moyen Âge," Paris, 1877-1886, new edition being published.

I.—ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS BEARING DIRECTLY ON ST. FRANCIS.

AMONG the original documents bearing directly on St. Francis and on the beginning of the Franciscan movement, the following are the principal: the two lives written by Tommaso di Celano and his treatise on the miracles of St. Francis; the life of the Three Companions; the writings of Brother Leo, among which Paul Sabatier placed the "Speculum Perfectionis"; the Chronicles of Thomas Eccleston and Jordanus of Giano; and the works of St. Francis.

1. Tommaso di Celano.

Tommaso di Celano was one of the disciples of the saint, and joined the order about 1215. He wrote his first life of St. Francis in 1228, at the request of Gregory IX.

After the General Chapter of 1244, which recommended the completion of the biography of the saint, Tommaso di Celano was again requested to write what he knew or could gather about the founder. The result was the "Vita

Secunda," the first part of which was composed about 1246, and the second in the beginning of the generalship of Giovanni di Parma, who was elected in 1247.

These two lives of Tommaso di Celano deserve the first rank in a study of the sources of the history of St. Francis. Mr. Paul Sabatier accuses their author of weakness of character and partiality, as he seems to favor the party of the Spirituals or that of the Mitigants according as the one or the other happened to be in power at the time of his writing. Few critics have subscribed to Sabatier's view on this subject, as everything in the two lives in question reveals the greatest fairness. Possibly the influence of the party in power may at times be seen in the writings of Tommaso di Celano, but it never affects them to such an extent as to color the facts which he relates. He remains the most reliable historian for the study of the Franciscan beginnings and his two lives are still the main source of information on the life of St. Francis and his first companions.

The first life was published for the first time by the Bollandists in the second volume for October of the "Acta Sanctorum." Both the first

and the second have been published several times, —by Rinaldi,[1] who gave the first edition of the second life of Tommaso di Celano, then by Amoni,[2] and lately by H. G. Rosedale.[3] Another edition promised by Father Edward of Alençon, O.F.M. Cap., archivist of the order, is anxiously awaited.

The "Tractatus de Miraculis" of Tommaso di Celano, which is, as it were, a supplement to his two lives, was published in the "Analecta Bollandiana,"[4] and in Rosedale's "St. Fran. of Assisi."

2. The Three Companions.

According to the opinion generally held until recent times, the same recommendation of the Chapter of 1244, which gave rise to the second life by Tommaso di Celano, also occasioned the composition of the life of the "Three Companions," in which Brothers Leo, Angelo, and Rufino, all companions of the saint, wrote down what they themselves had seen and heard.

An important question arose a few years ago: Was the document which we possess and which

[1] "Seraph. Viri S. Franc. Ass. vitæ duæ, Auct. B. Thoma de Celano." Roma, 1806.

[2] Roma, 1880.

[3] "St. Francis of Assisi, according to Brother Thomas of Celano." London, 1904.

[4] Vol. xviii, pp. 113-173.

was first published by the Bollandists, the whole legend of the Three Companions, or only a fragment of it? From a study of the document, the fragmentary character of this life appeared evident.

Two Franciscans, Marcellino da Civezza and Teofilo Domenichelli, tried to reconstruct it in its integrity,[1] but their results have not been admitted by critics in general.

The authenticity itself of the legend of the Three Companions has also been much contested. A number of critics, Catholics among others, think that the legend, even in its short form, was compiled in the fourteenth century.[2] Yet Paul Sabatier and a few other critics still hold to the traditional view: "After having

[1] "La leggenda di San Francesco scritta da tre suoi compagni (Legenda Trium Sociorum)," Roma, 1899. The reconstruction was rather a transposition, as the chapters which the editors add to the text known so far as the Legend of the Three Companions are mostly taken from the Speculum Perfectionis and the second life of Tommaso di Celano.

[2] Cf. for instance L. Lemmens: "Les deux Speculum Perfectionis." H. Tilemann: "Speculum Perfectionis und Legenda Trium Sociorum." S. Minocchi: "La Legenda Trium Sociorum," Florence, 1900. "La questione Francescana," Turin, 1902. Edward of Alençon: "La légende de St. François, dite des Trois Compagnons," Paris, 1902. Van Ortroy in "Acta Bollandiana," V, xix.

studied Fr. Van Ortroy's work with all the attention of which I am capable," says Sabatier,[1] "the authenticity seems to me more evident than ever." Which is the correct view, the future alone can reveal.[2]

3. Brother Leo.

We know from different sources that Brother Leo, the secretary and confessor, the intimate friend of St. Francis, who called him "Pecorella di Dio," on account of his simplicity, wrote different works on the life of his beloved Father and on the heroic times of the order. He belonged to the Spirituals, and spent his life and energy in trying to preserve the ideal which St. Francis had left to his children. This was probably the cause of the disappearance of his writings and also of the obscurity which, even to this day, surrounds his person and his works.

We have seen his name already mentioned as

[1] In "Revue Historique," Jan., Feb., 1901. Cf. also P. Sabatier's "Nouveaux travaux sur les documents Franciscains," Paris, 1904.

[2] Cf. also Ch. Woeste: "St. François d'Assise et la légende des Trois Compagnons" in "Revue Générale de Bruxelles," 1903, pp. 5–21. "American Cath. Quart. Review," 1900, pp. 657–674. "Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique," 1905, Ap. 15, book reviews by S. Le Grelle.

one of the three companions who wrote the life of St. Francis at the request of the Chapter of 1244.

All agree also in attributing to him a life of Brother Egidio, which has come down to us through the "Chronicle of the XXIV Generals," a document of the fourteenth century published by the Franciscans of Quaracchi in the "Analecta Franciscana;"[1] but it was admitted that this life of Egidio was not the original document, but had been considerably altered. Fr. Leonard Lemmens thinks[2] he has found the original text of this life, and has published it in his series of "Documenta antiqua Franciscana," with two other minor works of Brother Leo: "Liber de intentione Sti. Francisci," and "Verba Sancti Francisci."

A greater controversy exists concerning the "Speculum Perfectionis," which P. Sabatier edited in 1898, not only as the principal work of Brother Leo, but also as the most ancient legend of St. Francis.[3] According to him Brother Leo

[1] T. III, 1897.

[2] "Scripta Fratris Leonis." Quaracchi, 1901, p. 12.

[3] "Speculum Perfectionis, seu S. Francisci Assisiensis Legenda Antiquissima," Paris, 1898, translated into English by Ctesse. C. de la Warr: "The Mirror of Perfection," London, 1902.

wrote this work immediately after having broken the marble vase which Elia, in order to solicit the offerings of the faithful, had put on the site where the basilica and the tomb of St. Francis were to be erected; hence it would have been completed on the 11th of May, 1227, i. e. only seven months after the death of St. Francis. Sabatier's conclusions have not been admitted by all critics: Mgr. Faloci Pulignani,[1] Fr. Mandonnet,[2] Fr. Edward d' Alençon,[3] and other scholars, have denied that the "Speculum Perfectionis" was the work, at least exclusively, of Brother Leo, and have assigned to it a much later date. Fr. Leonard Lemmens, in publishing what he calls the "Redactio Prior" of the "Speculum Perfectionis," asserts that this is the work of Leo and his companions. It was written, he says, like the second life of Tommaso di Celano, at the request of the General Chapter of 1244, while the "Speculum Perfectionis" published by P. Sabatier is a compilation, which, it is true, contains all the chapters of the original document, but has received many additions at a later date and really belongs,

[1] "Miscell. Franc.," May–June, 1898.
[2] "Revue Thomiste," July, 1898.
[3] "Annales Franc.," July–Aug., 1898.

in the form in which Sabatier gives it, to the fourteenth century.

4. Chroniclers of the Order.

Besides the biographies proper, the various Chronicles of the order contain valuable information on St. Francis and particularly on the beginnings of the order. The works of Thomas Eccleston and Jordanus of Giano are more than mere compilations, for these men wrote about events which they themselves had witnessed. The "Liber de adventu Fratrum Minorum in Anglia" of Thomas Eccleston, which, as its title points out, relates more particularly the events connected with the establishment of the Franciscans in England, was published for the first time in the "Monumenta Franciscana" of J. S. Brewer in 1858. Another fragment of the same work was published in 1882 by R. Howlet, in the second volume of the "Monumenta Franciscana."[1] In his Chronicle, Jordanus of Giano, while relating the origin and development of the order in Germany, gives also most valuable information on St. Francis and especially on the crisis of the

[1] London. Roll series. Translated into English by F. Cuthbert: "The Friars and how they came to England." London, 1903.

year 1219. This was first published by G. Vogt in 1870, under the heading "Die Denkwürdigkeiten des Minoriten Jordanus von Giano." The first volume of the "Analecta Franciscana" has reproduced the two Chronicles of Thomas of Eccleston and Jordanus of Giano.[1]

5. The Works of St. Francis.

The writings and sayings of St. Francis, by their very nature, deserve a prominent place in the list of original documents, for they reveal to us the very thoughts and impressions of their author; however, until a few years ago there was no reliable edition of these works. They had been collected by Wadding,[2] with little discrimination, and have often been republished since without improvement in the selection or correctness of the text. It is only within late years that the Franciscan Fathers of Quaracchi have brought forth a more reliable edition of them.[3] The severity with which they have eliminated spurious or doubtful documents

[1] Quaracchi, 1885. Jord., pp. 1–20; Eccleston, pp. 215–256.

[2] Anvers 1623 in 4o.

[3] "Opuscula S. P. Francisci Assisiensis," Quaracchi, 1904. Cf. also "Seraphicæ Legislationis Textus originales," Quaracchi. 1897.

from the old edition deserves the highest credit.[1] H. Boehmer has also published a critical edition of St. Francis's works.[2] Yet the definitive edition is still a desideratum.

Before closing the list of the original Franciscan documents bearing directly on St. Francis, while we must omit several minor lives or abridgements, we must mention the charming allegory "Sacrum Commercium Beati Francisci cum Domina Paupertate," published by Edward of Alençon[3] and translated into English by Montgomery Carmichael.[4] It is recognized by all critics to be a most ancient document which, though it has little historical value, yet, as it were, introduces us into the very thoughts of the pioneer lovers of Lady Poverty.

[1] Cf. M. Carmichael: "The writings of St. Francis," in "Month," Feb., 1904.

[2] H. Boehmer: "Analekten zur Geschichte des Franciscus von Assisi. S. Francisci opuscula . . etc." Tübingen, 1904. Cf. on these works P. Sabatier: "Examens de quelques travaux récents sur les opuscules de St. François," Paris, 1904.

[3] Roma, 1900.

[4] "The Lady Poverty," New York and London, 1902.

II.—ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS BEARING INDIRECTLY ON ST. FRANCIS.

BESIDES the above-mentioned documents, which are all the works of Franciscans, and treat *ex professo* of the history of St. Francis or of the order, there is another class of original sources which, though coming from outsiders, and mentioning only incidentally the events which interest us here, serve as a most valuable confirmation of the authority of the direct sources.

Among these may be mentioned the Papal documents connected with the order in its first years. These can be found principally in the "Bullarium Franciscanum,"[1] in the "Regesti del Pontifice Onorio III,"[2] and in the "Regesti del Cardinale Ugolino di Ostia . . ."[3]

Among the Chroniclers outside the order, who speak of Franciscan events, Jacques de Vitry deserves particular mention. He refers to the

[1] Roma, 4 vols. in fo., 1759–1768.
[2] Roma, 1804.
[3] Roma, 1890.

Friars in two letters, one from 1216, republished by Sabatier as an appendix to his "Speculum Perfectionis"; the other from 1220, published both in the "Gesta Dei per Francos," and in Vitry's "Historia occidentalis,"[1] written during the life-time of Francis. These three extracts may also be found in H. Boehmer's "Analekten zur Geschichte des Franciscus von Assisi."

[1] Chap. XXXII: "De ordine et prædicatione Fratrum Minorum." Cf. also "Jacobi Vitriacensis episcopi et cardinalis, 1180–1240, sermones ad fratres Minores," Rome, 1903.

III.—COMPILATIONS.—RECENT WORKS.

WITH St. Bonaventure begins the period of compilations, while the original sources disappear more and more.

The occasion of the composition of St. Bonaventure's legend and its nature have already been pointed out. Though it has not the value of the first legends, it is, however, a most useful document. No one can doubt the veracity of the author, for, though he does not say everything, yet, all that he says is true and reliable. We find in this life many facts which are new to us either because they were compiled from legends which have since disappeared, or perhaps because St. Bonaventure received some direct information from the immediate disciples of St. Francis. As it was the official legend of the order, it was published before all the others and has often been republished since: it may be found also in the "Acta Sanctorum."[1]

The "Liber de Laudibus Sti. Francisci" of Bernardo da Bessa, the companion or secretary

[1] T. II. Octob.

of St. Bonaventure, dates also from the same epoch and brings a few new data. It was published for the first time in 1897.[1]

The last document of the thirteenth century is the Chronicle of Brother Salimbene da Parma, written between 1282 and 1287. It contains very valuable information on the early troubles in the order.

Though the later works may occasionally contain facts extracted from early legends now unknown to us, it will be enough merely to mention them here, as their value decreases with the distance which separates them from the time of St. Francis.

In the fourteenth century we have the "Arbor vitæ crucifixi," by Ubertino da Casale, a fervent "Zelator"; the "Chronica Tribulationum," in which Angelo di Clareno, also of the same party, narrates the tribulations of the faithful disciples of St. Francis; the "Liber Conformitatum," by Bartolomeo da Pisa, in which the author shows the resemblance between Francis and Our Lord. To this same century also belong the well-known "Fioretti," the original of which Sabatier attributes to Brother Ugolino;[2] the "Speculum

[1] "Liber de Laud. Sti. Franc. Curante Hilarino a Lucerna," Rome, 1897. Also in "Anal. Franc.," 1897.

[2] P. Sabatier: "Actus Beati Francisci et Sociorum ejus." "Floretum Sti. Francisci," Paris, 1902.

Vitæ Sti. Francisci et Sociorum ejus;"[1] the "Chronica Generalium ministrorum O.F.M."; and the "Tractatus de Indulgentia S. Mariæ de Portiuncula" of Brother Francesco Bartholdi of Assisi, edited by Paul Sabatier.[2]

In the sixteenth century, Glassberger,[3] Mark of Lisbon, and Mariano of Florence wrote Chronicles of the order, and in the seventeenth century Luke Wadding published his famous "Annales Minorum" in eight folio volumes.[4]

But as we go down from the fourteenth century to the eighteenth, the writers on St. Francis and his order abandon more and more the original documents and use almost exclusively later compilations. Wadding himself, in spite of his erudition, has not avoided this defect.

It is only with the Bollandists in the eighteenth century that we see a return to the proper study of the sources. They published the first life by Tommaso di Celano, the work of the Three Companions, and the New Legend of St. Bonaventure, with a good commentary by Fr. Constant Suyskens; but, unfortunately, the second life of Tommaso di Celano escaped them.

[1] Venice, 1504.
[2] Paris, 1900.
[3] "Analecta Franciscana." Vol. II.
[4] Lyons, 1625. 2d ed. in 16 vols., Roma, 1731.

Since then, the study of St. Francis and the first Franciscans has developed wonderfully. Nicolo Papini[1] was among the first to adopt, in the use of the Franciscan sources, the critical method inaugurated by the Bollandists.

Among those who, after him, wrote lives and histories of St. Francis from the Catholic point of view, may be mentioned Chavin de Malan,[2] A. de Ségur,[3] Luigi Palomes,[4] Panfilo da Magliano,[5] Léopold de Chérancé,[6] Anast. Bocci,[7] Daurignac,[8] Léon Le Monnier,[9] L. de Kerval,[10] Berthaumier,[11] F. X. Keller,[12] Bern-

[1] "La Storia di San Francesco d'Assisi, Opera Critica," Foligno, 1825-1827. "Notizie secure della morte, sepoltura, cannonizzazione e translazione di San Francesco," Foligno, 1824.

[2] "Histoire de Saint François," Paris, 1841.

[3] "Histoire populaire de Saint François," Paris, 1867.

[4] "Storia di San Francesco," Palermo, 1873.

[5] "Storia compendiosa di San Francesco e dei Francescani," 2 vols., Roma, 1874–1876.

[6] "Saint François d'Assise," Paris, 1879.

[7] "Il vero amico del popolo, San Francesco," Pistoia, 1882.

[8] "Histoire de Saint François," Abbeville, 1887.

[9] "Histoire de Saint François d'Assise," 2 vols., Paris, 1889.

[10] "St. François el l'ordre séraphique," Vanves, 1898.

[11] "Vie de St. François," Tours, 1889.

[12] "Der heilige Franziscus von Assisi," R. b., 1893.

hard Christen,[1] De la Rive,[2] Cusack,[3] Paul Henry,[4] F. Tarducci.[5] Among Protestants and Rationalists we have as biographers of the saint: G. Vogt,[6] Karl Hase,[7] R. Bonghi,[8] Sir James Stephen,[9] Mrs. Oliphant,[10] Canon Knox Little,[11] Staff Captain Douglas of the Salvation Army,[12] Arvède Barine,[13] John Herkless,[14] Jas. Adderley,[15] J. H. McIlvaine,[16] T. E. Harvey.[17]

[1] "Leben des heiligen Franciscus von Assisi," Innsbruck, 1899.

[2] "Saint François d'Assise," Genève, 1901.

[3] "St. Francis and Franciscans," Baltimore, 1902.

[4] "St. François d'Assise et son école d'après les documents originaux," Paris, 1903.

[5] "Vita di San Francesco d'Assisi," Mantua, 1904.

[6] "Der heilige Franziscus," Tübingen, 1840.

[7] "Franz von Assisi, ein Lebensbild," Leipsig, 1856.

[8] "Francesco d'Assisi," Citta di Castello, 1884.

[9] "Saint Francis of Assisi," in "Essays in ecclesiastical biographies."

[10] "Francis of Assisi," London, 1889.

[11] "St. Francis of Assisi, his times, life and work." Lectures in Worcester Cathedral. New York, 1897.

[12] "Brother Francis, or less than the least," in the Red Hot Library.

[13] "St. François d'Assise et la légende des Trois Compagnons," Paris, 1901.

[14] "Francis, Dominic and the Mendicant Orders," in the "World Epoch Makers" series. New York, 1901.

[15] "Francis, the Little Poor Man of Assisi," London, 1901.

[16] "Saint Francis of Assisi," six lectures in Lent. [New York, 1902.

[17] "St. Francis, etc." London, 1904.

Others have studied Francis from some particular point of view, or have described some special phase of his life and work.

Granger de D.,[1] Bernardin de Paris,[2] Ausserer,[3] Fr. Stanislaus, O.S.F.C., etc.,[4] . . have considered mainly the saint in Francis.

Then we may mention various essays, as those of J. E. Renan,[5] Delécluze,[6] Frattini,[7] Odeschalchi,[8] Dubosc,[9] R. Mariano,[10] Westlake,[11] P. Doreau,[12] Fr. Paschal Robinson,[13] G. Schnürer,[14]

[1] "Saint François d'Assise, Providence du Moyen Âge par amour," Paris, 1875.

[2] "L'esprit de Saint François d'Assise," 2 vols., Paris, 1880.

[3] "Der heilige Franciscus, Christi Nachbild und des Christen Vorbild," Innsbruck, 1882.

[4] "The inner life of St. Francis," London, 1900.

[5] "Saint François d'Assise," in "Nouvelles études religieuses." [d'Aquin," 2 vols., Paris, 1844.

[6] "Grégoire VII, St. François d'Assise, St. Thomas

[7] "San Francesco e la città di Spello," Assisi, 1881.

[8] "Tre grandi Uomini: Christoforo Colombo, San Francesco d'Assisi e il Cid," Studii., Roma, 1885.

[9] "Saint François d'Assise," Thèse, Montauban, 1882.

[10] "Francesco d'Assisi e alcuni dei suoi più recenti biografi," Napoli, 1896.

[11] "On the authentic Portraiture of St. Francis of Assisi," London, 1897.

[12] "St. François d'Assise et son œuvre." Paris, 1902.

[13] "The real St. Francis of Assisi," 1903. "The teaching of St. Francis of Assisi." 1905.

[14] "Die Vertiefung des religiösen Lebens . . . etc., Franz von Assisi," Munich, 1905.

the "Omaggio storico, filosofico, teologico al Patriarcha San Francesco,"[1] etc. . . .

The history of the first Franciscans has been treated by Luigi Palomes,[2] Panfilo da Magliano,[3] Marcellino da Civezza,[4] in Italy; by H. de Grèzes,[5] Ubald de Chanday,[6] L. de Kerval,[7] de Barenton,[8] in France; by Evers,[9] A. Hertzog,[10] in Germany; and by A. Jessop,[11] Anne McDonell,[12] in England.

On the Third Order we have the works of

[1] 2 vols., Prato, 1882.

[2] "Dei Frati Minori e delle loro denominazioni," Palermo, 1897.

[3] "Storia compendiosa di San Francesco e dei Francescani," 2 vols., Roma, 1874–1876.

[4] "Storia universale delle missione Francescane," Roma, 1857; Prato, 1881.

[5] "L'Ordre de Saint François," Paris, 1884.

[6] "Les fils de Saint François," Paris, 1884. These two works, with "Saint François dans l'art," and the life of St. Francis by Léopold of Chérancé, have been published in an *édition de luxe* under the care of Du Chatel, de Porrentruy et Brin, 1 vol., 4to, Paris, 1885.

[7] "Saint François d'Assise et l'ordre Séraphique," Vanves, 1898.

[8] " Les Franciscains en France," in the "Science et Religion" series. Paris, 1903. [Leipsig, 1882.

[9] "Analecta ad Fratrum Minorum historiam,"

[10] " Franciscus von Assisi, der Gründer des Franciscanerordens," Zabern, 1894.

[11] "The Coming of the Friars."

[12] "The Sons of Francis," London, 1902.

Breisdorff,[1] Gérard de Vaucouleur,[2] and particularly those of Karl Müller,[3] and P. Mandonnet, O. P.,[4] which are masterpieces of historical research.

Miss Duff Gordon has published in the series of "Medieval Towns"[5] a little work which contains interesting data on Francis and his native place. Beryl D. de Selincourt also, in his "Homes of the First Franciscans,"[6] has written in the same line.

From a psychological and medical point of view, St. Francis has been studied by Steyrer;[7] and more recently by two physicians, M. A. Bournet,[8] a Protestant, and Th. Cotelle,[9] a Catholic.

[1] "Der dritten Orden des heiligen Franciscus und seine Regel," Luxembourg, 1876.

[2] "Documents pour expliquer la régle du Tiers Ordre," Paris, 1899.

[3] "Die Anfänge des Minoritenordens," Freiburg, 1885.

[4] "Les origines de l'ordre de Pœnitentia," Fribourg, 1898. "Les règles et le gouvernement de l'Ordo de Pœnitentia au XIII^e Siécle," Paris, 1902.

[5] "Assisi," London, 1900.

[6] London, 1905.

[7] "Disquisitio historica, an Sanctus Franciscus Assisiensis fuerit homo insanus et fanaticus," Friburgi Brisgoviæ, 1779.

[8] "Étude sociale et médicale sur St. François d'Assise," Paris, 1893.

[9] "St. François d'Assise, étude médicale," Paris, 1895.

Then, coming nearer to our subject, Goerres,[1] F. Ozanam,[2] Heinrich,[3] M. . . , the anonymous writer already referred to,[4] Henry Thode,[5] Alphonse Germain,[6] have shown the influence of St. Francis on literature and art.

The reform work proper of St. Francis has also been the object of a few books. The work of Francesco Prudenzano[7] on this subject has gone through many editions. The author, however, treats rather of the influence of Francis on civilization, and seems to exaggerate this influence: he calls the period which preceded Francis the "Periodo barbaro e di tradizioni pagane," while the following period is qualified by the name of "Periodo di Civiltà."

Shortly after the publication of Prudenzano's

[1] "Der heilige Franciscus von Assisi, ein Troubadour," Strassburg, 1826.

[2] "Les poètes Franciscains en Italie au XIII^e siècle," Paris, 1847.

[3] "Franciscus von Assisi und seine kulturhistorische Bedeutung," Frankfurt, 1883.

[4] "Saint François dans l'art," Paris, 1884.

[5] "Franciscus von Assisi und die Anfänge der Kunst der Renaissance in Italien," Berlin, 1885.

[6] "L'influence de St. François sur la civilization et les arts," in the "Science et Religion" series, Paris, 1903.

[7] "Franc. d'Ass. e il suo secolo," Naples, 1852.

work, Fred. Morin wrote a little book on St. Francis,[1] in which he shows well the influence of the Third Order on the social and political institutions of the time. This work has long been out of print; a summary of it by the author himself may be found in Migne's " Dictionnaire de philosophie Scolastique."

Giussepe Orlando, S.J., published in the "Sicilia Cattolica" a series of articles which were translated into French and published in book form under the heading of "Saint François d'Assise et son influence religieuse, sociale, littéraire et artistique."[2] The work has little scientific value.

A little brochure, whose title seems to herald great things, "Der Apostel der Armuth, St. Franciscus von Assisi, ein Befreier und Reformator im Geiste der katholischen Kirche,"[3] can not fail to disappoint the reader, as it is little more than a refutation of H. Thode's Protestant ideas on St. Francis.

Again the little volume of Sac. Dott. A. Cantono[4] deserves passing mention here; but, as the

[1] "St. François et les Franciscains," Paris, 1853.

[2] Paris, 1885. The original may be found in the numbers of Sept. and Oct., 1882, of "La Sicilia [Cattolica."

[3] By C. P., Weihnachten, 1893.

[4] "San Francesco d'Assisi e la democrazia Cristiana," from the "Fede e Scienza" series, Roma, 1903.

author himself says, it has no pretension to erudition and is destined only for popular reading.

The work of F. Glaser[1] has far more critical value; it is written from the Protestant point of view and treats mainly of the idea of poverty in its relations to the reform movement of the Middle Ages, and particularly to that inaugurated by St. Francis.

Finally, we may not omit the encyclical of Leo XIII, "Auspicato concessum est,"[2] besides his letters and discourses on the reform wrought by Francis, particularly through the Third Order.[3]

This list is not exhaustive. We have omitted all the works which do not treat directly of St. Francis, but which contain, however, a great deal that might and should have a place in a complete bibliography of the subject.[4] We have left

[1] "Die Franziskanische Bewegung," Stuttgard, 1903.

[2] Sept. 17, 1882.

[3] Passim in "Acta." All documents relating to the Third Order have been collected in a popular edition, "Le Pape et le Tiers Ordre," by Fr. Pascal. Cf. also Fernandez Garcia Marianus, O.F.M.: "S.S. D. N. Leonis P.P. XIII, Acta ad Tertium Franciscanum ordinem spectantia." Quaracchi, 1901.

[4] Cf. for instance: Emile Gebhart, "Italie mystique," Paris, 1893. Harnack: "Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte," Freiburg, I. B., 1890; "Das Mönchtum . . . etc." Ludovic de Besse: "Le Bienheureux Bernardin de Feltre et son œuvre," Tours, 1902.

out also an immense amount of literature on Francis which is to be found in magazines and reviews of all kinds and of all countries.[1] It is hardly necessary to call attention to the fact that this literature, both in magazines and in book form, is growing every day. Evidently the cause of this popularity is to be traced ultimately to the sweet figure of the Poverello himself; but we must mention two men who have greatly contributed to this Franciscan movement, two men who, though far apart in religious opinion, met on common ground in the love of St. Francis,—Leo XIII and Paul Sabatier. To Leo XIII, who believed that society to-day can be reformed, as it was in the thirteenth century, through the Third Order,—to his influence,—to his encyclical "Auspicato concessum est," recommending the Third Order to all the faithful,—to his constitution "Misericors Dei Filius," adapting the rule of the Third Order to present conditions and

[1] Cf. Reviews of Articles on St. Francis in "Acta Bollandiana." Poole's directory for English reviews. Articles in "Le Vingtième siècle" on the social action of St. Francis. Georg Ratzinger: "Die soziale Bedeutung des heiligen Franziskus" in "Forshung. zur bayr. Gesch.," 1897. Paul Sabatier: "St. Francis and the 20th century" in "Contemporary Rev.," Dec., 1902.

needs,—to the active part which he took in the Franciscan reform, we owe not only the abundant literature of late years on the social rôle of St. Francis and the Third Order, but also the practical movement towards religious and social reform again revived by the Third Order in modern times. To Sabatier we owe the universal enthusiasm which has spread not only through the Catholic world, but among Protestants and Rationalists as well. It is true, Goerres, Karl Hase, Vogt, Thode, Bonghi, Renan, had already recounted in the Protestant and Rationalist world the glories of the Poverello; but there is no doubt that the life of St. Francis published by Sabatier in 1893 awakened a new enthusiasm, which has continued to increase ever since. His life of St. Francis was immediately translated into all languages, and in France alone it has already gone through twenty-nine editions. The works of Alderley, Knox Little, Herkless, McIlvaine, McDonell, to quote only English authors, can all be traced to the influence of Paul Sabatier, and it would perhaps not be outside the truth to say that even most Catholic works which have since appeared on the history of St. Francis, have been called forth by Sabatier's work. They arose either as a pro-

test against the new presentation of the saint, or in holy emulation; they represent an earnest endeavor to offer to the world a tribute from a Catholic point of view as worthy of St. Francis as that offered to him by one of his Protestant admirers.

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